



The Pineywoods Rooter

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

April 2013

Volume 21 Number 4

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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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.

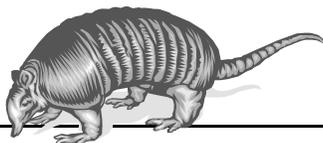
Visitors are invited to attend any of the regularly scheduled meetings.

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

Hope everyone got the rain that we needed, maybe a little too much for some. Spring has sprung and it will be getting hot before too long. It seems like just yesterday I was writing this for last month's meeting. Time does fly. I hope we can get a lot done in the work room before it gets too hot. Which reminds me, if you haven't driven by the club house do so and admire the new front door without paint that is. I think it was a unanimous at the last meeting that it should be painted green and will be so as soon as we have another work day.

I would like to encourage everyone to make the meeting this coming Thursday night. Attendance has been down it seems the last several meetings, so do make an effort to attend after all this is your club and I hope everyone will be part of it. The yearly show is already in the planning stages and there will be a need for everyone's help to pull it off. I think Ann has sent out the vendor packets and the Event Center has been secured for the show. Be a part of something that is a lot of fun and work too, but that is what it is all about. We have had a lot of sickness in our club so I hope this bulletin finds everyone well, so until next time.

Bill Talcott

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 18, 2013
7:00 P.M.
Club House at 110 North Zavalla, Jasper TX
PROGRAM: Zeb Rike
"A Meteorite for Russia"**

UP-COMING SHOWS & EVENTS

APRIL 13-14 ABILENE, TEXAS
Central Texas Gem & Mineral Soc.
Abilene Civic Center
North 6th and Pine

APRIL 19-21 ALPINE, TEXAS
Chihuahua gem & Mineral Soc.
Alpine Civic Center

APRIL 20-21 WACO, TEXAS
Waco Gem & Mineral Society
Extraco Events Center

APRIL 27-28 LUBBOCK, TEXAS
Lubbock Gem & Mineral Society
Lubbock Memorial Civic Center
1501 Mac Davis Lane

ANNIVERSARIES

SONJA & ROBERT RICHARD 4/13

DONNA & RON DUCOTE 4/22

2012 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
Historian . . . OPEN
Auction . . . John Nash
Education . . . Janice Herron
Chamber of Commerce...Wanda Page
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.pinecountrygms.org

BIRTHDAYS

PAUL JAMES 4/3
FRED HERRON 4/19

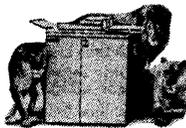
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Notice to Exchange Bulletin Editors:

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

**BIRTHSTONE FOR APRIL:
DIAMOND OR QUARTZ**

Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society Meeting

Pine Country Gem and Mineral Society Meeting

P. O. Box 2513 – Jasper, Texas –

MINUTES FOR MARCH 21, 2013



The PCG&MS met on March 21, 2013 at the club house for the regular monthly meeting. There were twenty-seven members attending.

The meeting was called to order by Bill Talcott. There were five visitors present including several members of the local cub scouts pack. They were Matthew Bordelon, Nina Bordelon, Christian Lawson, Martha Hanlon, and Sandy Pery. It was reported that Ruth Howell and Charlotte Beebe were sick. Everyone enjoyed a potluck meal with a variety of dishes and goodies. It was decided that once a quarter there will be a potluck meal and the remaining meetings there will be cookies only. A list was sent around for volunteers for each meeting.

After a break, the business meeting began with the adoption of the minutes as recorded in the bulletin. A motion was made by Jonetta Nash with a second by Ron Ducote, the motion passed. The Treasurers report was given by Sharon Stalsby with a motion by Ron Ducote and second by Joe Griggs, the motion passed. Committee reports were presented. Fred Brown/Paul James reported that they were working on a field trip to Crockett to collect petrified wood, fossils, and arrowheads at a gravel pit. Jonetta Nash reported that membership records need to be updated so that the membership list can be finalized. Bill Talcott needs ideas for programs. It was reported for Wanda Page that there are numerous Chamber of Commerce events planned for the spring. Anyone interested can check the Chamber website. The Business Builders Breakfast was hosted by PCG&MS on March 14, 2013. The breakfast was a huge success with many people interested in the club. It was reported for Ann James that contracts were sent out to vendors for the show and that a deposit was paid for the Event

Center. Donna Ducote requested volunteer hostesses for the meetings. Bill Talcott reported that a new front door was ready to be installed and that a work day would be scheduled. A motion was made by Bill Talcott to make a \$250.00 donation to the American Federation in Charlotte Harmon's name. The motion was seconded by Charles Kerr and passed by vote.

Jonetta Nash reported in the form of a motion that the building insurance renewal would be a policy for \$105,000 for the building and \$30,000 for contents. The renewal is \$1068 a year. A second by Paul James and the motion passed.

In new business, Sharon Kerr announced that the Master Gardner's would be going to Tyler to the Rose Garden and then on a tour of a coal mine. There were a few spots left if anyone is interested.

Winner of the half and half drawing of \$18.00 was Rich Geist and Carmon Rike won the door prize drawing that was provided by Robbie Smith.

On a motion by Rich Geist and seconded by Joe Griggs the meeting was adjourned.

Attendees at the Meeting: Robbie Smith, Lonnie and Sharon Stalsby, Paul James, Bill and Linda Talcott, Michelle and Carter Talcott, Ron and Donna Ducote, Jody Dorman, Charles and Sharon Kerr, John and Jonetta Nash, Maxine Wagner, Fred and Janice Heron, Fred Brown, Zeb and Carmon Rike, Joe Griggs, Keith Stephens, Lori Horne, Allie Bloom, Rich Geist, and Ron Carpenter.

Submitted by Michelle Talcott, Secretary

If a Fish Eats Grit, Will He Feel Roughly?

by Rich Geist (member of Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society)

I use a Lortone 15 inch vibratory lap in my rock shop to polish agate and petrified wood. As time passes, the grit in the pan is ground away and more grit needs to be added. I often find it rather annoying that I'm unable to go too far when this lap is running, since I need to return to the shop every couple of hours to add more grit. The need for long run times is due to the fact that my slab saw blade doesn't run as true as it should. While on spring break I decided to design a grit dispenser that would add grit automatically to my lap pan.

I really enjoy spending time polishing rocks and fossils in my shop, but I also enjoy designing and building my own lapidary devices. I had to do some shopping at the local pet supply store and happened to see a programmable fish feeder and my mind went into overdrive. Could a programmable fish feeder be used to dispense grit into a vibratory lap pan? Turns out, the answer is yes. This gizmo is a bit pricey, but it would certainly have cost more to design and build my own grit dispenser. So I decided to take a chance and spent forty dollars on an Eheim Everyday Fish Feeder. It would have cost less online, but I didn't want to wait.

When I returned home I couldn't wait to play with my new toy, so I went out to the shop and began to experiment with this new fish feeder. I built a wood stand for the feeder that sits next to the lap pan, and fastened it using plastic zip ties. I quickly learned that the hole(screen) in the feeder reservoir allowed grit to get into the motor and gears. So..... I disassembled the unit and cleaned out all of the grit that was impeding the motor and gears. I used gap-filling superglue to plug the hole(screen) in the reservoir and tried again.

After cleaning the unit and plugging the hole, the unit worked great. I programmed the unit to dispense grit every three hours, added water and silicon carbide 220 grit in the lap pan, placed a few cut agates with noticeable saw blade marks in the lap pan, plugged in the unit, and walked away. Twelve hours later I returned to find that all of the agates were ready for the next grit. I cleaned the lap pan and agate and emptied and cleaned the feeder reservoir.

After placing a few tablespoons of silicon carbide 600 grit in the feeder reservoir and programming the unit to dispense grit every three hours for the next six hours, I added water and the agates and left my shop.

After using this fish feeder as a grit dispenser I will offer a few pointers. This unit included a user-friendly instructions sheet that was easy to read. After experimenting I realized that you don't need to fill the feeder reservoir, since the amount of grit dispensed during each programmed period is fairly small. Also, the opening which allows the grit to fall into the pan is adjustable. The unit has a button you can press to allow extra grit to be dispensed. You can adjust the opening and press this button to see if the correct amount of grit is dispensed during each period. Pressing this button will not affect your programmed settings.

I have to say that this is one of the coolest off-the-shelf devices I've ever used in my rock shop. This device allows me to program four separate times within a 24 hour period. I can add rock, water, and grit to my lap, program the fish feeder to dispense an adjustable amount of grit every three hours and return later to clean up. Pretty cool. Maybe I should work on my slab saw next?

WASSONITE

by Jody Dorman, PCGMS

Wassonite is an extremely rare sulfide mineral. Its discovery was announced in 2011. NASA press released as a single small grain within an enstaite chondrite meteorite called "Yomato 691", which was found during a 1969 Japanese expedition to the Antarctica. The mineral was named after John T. Wasson, a professor at the University of California in Los Angeles and was approved by the International Mineralogical Association.

Synthetic Compound: Titanium Sulfide
Chemical Formula TiS
Size Less Than A Hair Wide

Source Wikipedia and Facts About Wassonite

The Forensics of Fossilization

By Gary Raham

Nature successfully recycles 99% of her creations. Now and then, a small fraction of creatures survive thousands, millions, even billions of years. Most such fossils are fragmentary, but now and then rock like the Solnhofen Limestone of Germany will preserve birds like *Archaeopteryx* in exquisite detail. How does this happen? The January 28 issue of *Science News* reports that scientists have begun to look at the forensics of insipient fossilization.

David A. Krauss, a paleobiologist at City University of New York, has been dropping birds in water to see how their remains might travel to the future as fossils. His first trials showed that bird carcasses float a long time, until their internal air sacks are breached through decomposition. By that time, not much is left to fossilize in the sediments of a body of water. However, if a bird is dropped onto moist sediments with a lot of clay content, the clay soaks quickly into the feathers and locks the bird in place. When water is added to the tank, the bird stays in place. Krauss and colleagues added more sediment, then placed weights on top to simulate accumulated mud, and left the animal in place for three years. At the end of that time, the preservation pattern looked similar to that of Solnhofen material.

In 1998, scientists reported finding 570 million-year-old microscopic fossil embryos in the two and four-cell stages of development. Derek E. G. Briggs, a paleontologist at Yale, has performed some experiments to show how this might have happened. Briggs took eggs of several modern crustaceans and placed them in glass vials containing a seawater-like fluid. They added phosphate to some vials, because phosphate was common in the rocks containing the embryo fossils. The added estuary sediment to many vials to simulate burial and sealed the vials and stored them at 150 C.

Bacteria in the vials began decomposing organics, including the embryos, until they ran out of oxygen. At that point, the bacteria died. The hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide, and fatty acids produced during the limited decomposition turned the water more acidic. This allowed phosphate and carbonate to more easily precipitate on what remained of the

precipitate on what remained of the embryos. A complete coating of minerals only occurred in the vials where the eggs were completely buried in sediment. Briggs results were reported in the December 2005 issue of *Palaios*.

Mummified dinosaurs are always popular. In some cases, skin and muscle gets preserved in amazing detail. As early as 1983, scientists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison decided to study the decomposition of a rhino donated by a nearby zoo. They buried it on its side at a depth of 2 meters in sandy, well-drained soil. The soil was always moist and at a nearly constant temperature of 730 C. In the early 1990s they dug up the animal and found that the hind limbs had become detached. They took some tissue samples and reburied the carcass. By the spring of 2002, much of the flesh of the creature's rear legs and lower front legs was gone but the muscles from the rhino's forelimbs and shoulder were "moist, pliable, and bright red," almost like they had just come out of a butcher's shop. The body cavity had become surrounded by a thick layer of adipocere—a substance sometimes called grave wax. Such wax often forms in moist, cool situations when Chemical reactions crosslink fat molecules, turning them into a kind of soap. "Soap mummies" are actually more common than the dried out kind we usually think of. The researchers found crystals of a mineral called struvite, a hydrated version of ammonium calcium phosphate. Struvite deposits near fossils may serve as an indicator that soft tissue has been preserved. The best-preserved dinosaur mummies may have begun their fossil careers as such soap mummies. Via The Lodestone, Feb. 2006, via SCRIBE CD

Annual Show Report From Ann James

The venue contract has been signed and fees paid for The Event Center. Vendor contracts have been mailed out to last year's vendors. The deadline for their responses has been set for May 1st. I already have a "waiting list" with two vendors interested in participating should there be availability.

RANDOM LAPIDARY MUSINGS- (FREE) ROCKS ARE (VERY) HEAVY

Zeb William Rike III

Our son Frank read my earlier short story "Rocks are Heavy" and laughed and said, "Dad, you *must* write about our rock collecting vacation." So I began considering our experience that many other rock-hounds will find familiar.

We drove our van to a Boy Scout convention at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and took a leisurely trip back through the Hill Country with some planned hunts. The van was a heavy-duty commercial delivery vehicle with extra-heavy transmission and drive shaft. We bought the vehicle second-hand from a friend who raised rabbits and would deliver as many as 300 caged rabbits at a time, so was equipped with high-capacity AC unit. As it had just driver and passenger seats, we added a storage box with hinged lid along one side and padded the lid and equipped it with seat belts.

We had space to carry our camping gear as well as any rocks we might pick up on the trip. In a road cut somewhere south-west of Waco, we saw outcroppings of a fossil-bearing limestone hard enough to take a polish and collected some. First night out, we found a city park and slept in the vehicle without asking anyone if it was permissible.

The 'time and temperature' sign in front of the bank in Waco had shown 112°F, the reason it was so uncomfortable. Further down the road we spent one day and night in a 'for pay' ranch to look for topaz, with no idea of where to look. We found a stream cut down into the bedrock with gravel in the bottom. We reasoned that topaz was heavier than the native rock so spent our time digging gravel out of potholes in the bedrock—not fining anything. We did see the rancher when he unlocked the gate on the second day and were able to get out.

We drove on out through the country, picking up interesting rocks and looking for a place to camp. We saw a hand-painted sign pointing the way to a "Rock Shop, 4 miles". Having no plans otherwise, we turned and drove (four miles) till we saw a sign pointing back on the ranch, "Rocks for Sale". We drove perhaps a couple of miles on a winding gravel road past many piles of road-fill

gravel. We began to laugh, thinking that this was the "Rocks for Sale", but finally drove over a rise and there was a green valley with a nice house made of rocks of all kinds.

We met Mr. Otha Medart, a very interesting elderly gentleman who seemed to specialize in Mexican rocks and minerals. We swapped tales with him for the hotter part of the afternoon and spent a couple hundred dollars on rocks from him. Along toward dusk, we asked his recommendation for a place to camp. He said, "Down in my second pasture" and pointed to a gate. He further told us that we needed to make sure we locked the gates as he had young cows there. "They will come around to investigate you, but they will not bother you. And I have a new rock-bottom pond you can swim in. Don't worry that you don't have a swim suit; no one uses them out here."

We drove on down and found the pond with a lush growth of Bermuda grass perhaps a foot deep. We swam in his pond and just spread our bedrolls on the grass and slept under the stars. We wakened the next morning with perhaps a hundred yearling cows surrounding us, sniffing of us. Then they ambled off. We had a 'visitor' that morning; the next ranch had sheep and the owner had a young sheep dog—same size and shape as the sheep with curly hair—who wanted to come down and visit us instead of staying with his charges.

We spent another night on the Lambert ranch that was known for crinoids stem fossil limestone, just camping across a little creek from the owner's house. I found a nice piece of colonial coral about twice the size of my fist. The owner took us out and showed us where some of the limestone had been bulldozed and we got perhaps a hundred pounds of relatively low to medium grade material in several colors.

In our driving, we crossed a number of rivers with "bank-to-bank" grave and boulders on all kinds of igneous and metamorphic rocks and we loaded down with everything that had nice color and seemed to be hard. In addition, we saw a hillside covered with shiny brownish-black rocks which "obviously" would take a polish and picked up several paper grocery bags full. After we got home, I put about 30 pounds on to tumble, keeping back some of the largest to slice. When I sliced one of the large rocks, I found they were fairly soft

sandstone pebbles with a hard coating of ‘desert varnish’, and my tumblers were full of sand.

We picked up several relatively large pieces of weathered granite that were crumbly on the surface, only to find back in Orange that they were crumbly all the way through. More than I would like to admit were just broken up with a hammer and scattered in the garden.

And we spent the better part of an afternoon stopping at “every rock” along the route where the book showed Llanite was found. Finally we drove over a hill and below us was Llano with the Llano Monument Works to the right. Not having found anything of any value, we decided to stop there and ask if they had any monument stone scraps they could give us. They said, “We have tons of scraps that go to the landfill—gray granite from India, pink granite from Burnett, Llanite...” So they loaded us up with all kinds of monument materials, including a couple hundred pounds of Llanite. The owner of the Monument Works said the Llanite quarry was on his dad’s ranch and he had brought in a large piece to cut out a 3x6 foot slab to make a coffee table top for his wife; we got to see the polished slab. We also visited another monument works and got to see their huge ‘wire saws’ cutting multiple large slabs off of a massive block of granite. We got more scraps there too. All in all, we had a van load—then whole floor of the van covered with rocks to a depth of maybe 8-10”.

Needless to say, we had to replace the two ‘universal joints’ in the drive train. One day while I was at work, Carmon went down to High-Low Auto Parts and tried to buy the two universal joints and they insisted she did not know what she was wanting. So she came back home and removed the driveshaft and took it down and carried it in across her shoulder and laid it on the counter and said, “I need two of ‘these things’; I brought the whole thing in to make sure I got the right part as the van has a heavier transmission and drive shaft than your book will show.”

The younger employees gathered around and one asked her, “Do you cook?” She assured him she did and was good at it.

Someone else spoke up and said, “She makes and sells wedding cakes too.”

The first one blurted out, “I don’t know anything about you, but if you’re single, would you

marry me?”

Carmon laughed and said, “I have been married quite some time and you go to school with our son, Frank Rike. But thanks for the offer.”

The Way I See It Don Monroe, President AFMS

Some of the messages that I have received lately show me once again that emphasis placed on communication is certainly emphasis placed in the correct spot.

I really do appreciate e-mails, phone calls and letters and wish that I could get a lot more of them. I often feel that one of our shortcomings as a federation is a failure to keep our members informed. As an example I want to tell you about a recent communication from one of my closest friends in AFMS. This person and I had a long discussion about what we should be working on and if we are placing our emphasis in the right place. After we talked a while I called some other folks and we discussed the same issues.

I finally came to the conclusion that many of us need to spend more time reviewing our by-laws and our operating procedures. We have a lot of new people and a lot of people doing new jobs and I am one of them. Almost every day as I talk to our members I see other areas where I need to learn more and, in some cases, need advice from many of you that have been around for a while and can share your experience.

During my short tenure as your president I have concluded the following:

- We have so many good experienced people that we need to consult with regularly.

- Nobody knows it all regardless of how long they have served and in what positions they have served. To become better we need to communicate and work more closely together. This may sound trite, but I think it is the key.

Mineral Cleaning

Bridget Joubert
CenLa Rock hounds

At a recent rock show (Clearlake, TX) , we stopped by the Fender's mineral specimen booth to chat about their very fine minerals. Jim asked him how he got such beautiful pyrite and galena specimens. He said it was all in the cleaning he did prior to displaying. Here is what he said:

Galena: Soak the specimen in warm " Iron-Out™" to remove surface iron and lead oxides. This may take an all day soaking if very 'dirty'. Rinse well and scrub lightly with a bristle brush, NOT a wire brush, it scratches! Spray well with "Scrubbing Bubbles™" (no bleach type) and give it a good scrubbing with a tooth brush. Rinse well and let the specimen air dry completely (a fan helps speed this up) before putting it away. By the way, are you wearing kitchen dish gloves? Some people are sensitive to the aggressive chemicals in these cleaners so put on those gloves and safety glasses!

Pyrite: One of the problems with many Pyrite (FeS) specimens is that they may be in a mixture with Marcasite. Marcasite (FeS₂) is an unstable "Pyrite" and will slowly deteriorate as it is stored, especially in the damp air of Louisiana. If you find your nice pyrite specimen sitting on a pile of sulfur smelling grey ash, it is a mixture specimen! The Marcasite slowly converted to sulfuric acid and iron, eating away at the whole specimen.. cardboard box and all!

To clean up specimens with Marcasite, use that wire brush that was forbidden above! Get rid of all the visible Marcasite with a good soap scrubbing. As always, be sure to wear safety goggles when scrubbing any specimen, fine particles will fly all about and love to land in eyes! Rinse well and let dry for a while.

Ok, now spray the specimen with " Scrubbing Bubbles™" and use the tooth brush with vigor. The pyrite part will brighten up very nicely. For specimens that have pyrite on another mineral (i.e. dog-tooth calcite), adjust your scrubbing to prevent damage to the other mineral. Dry completely before storage.

Chalcopyrite: This iron sulfide mineral containing copper is often misidentified as pyrite. Look carefully at the "pyrite" crystals and see if there are

multi-colors showing, besides the plain 'gold' of pyrite. If so, this is probably chalcopyrite (peacock ore). Again, spray the specimen with "Scrubbing Bubbles™" and tooth brush scrub it. Though it will not be as bright as pyrite, it will shine up quite a bit, making your specimen come alive!

Other minerals: so far our experience with cleaning other minerals has been that "Scrubbing Bubbles™" works on all minerals but not as dramatically as it does on Pyrite and Galena. What it has done, however, is show us the presence of pyrite, galena, and chalcopyrite where we did not see it before due to oxidation and/or dirt. Yes, plain ole soap will clean minerals but the "Bubbles" seems to put that shine on them that other cleaning agents do not!

No, we do not have financial interest in Johnson's Company and their "Scrubbing Bubbles™" but we wish we did since it works so well on our specimens! via Hunting & Diggin, Deridder GMS, March 2013

DENDRITES

Did you know that dendrites are perhaps the most common geologic oddity? They usually resemble a tiny fern frond or colony of algae. The term "dendritic" refers to branching figure resembling a fern, frond, branch or tree. They are usually formed in thin hard-bedded shale and limestone. Concentrations of the manganese mineral called pyrolusite (black manganese oxide) percolate into the cracks and fissures of shale and limestone, leaving behind a residue which forms the dendritic patterns.

Source The Fossil Enquirer, via The Glacial Drifter 5/96, via Chips 'N Splinters, 9/05 via Blue Agate News, April 06

Province vs Provenance

Recently I was admiring a mineral collection when I noticed the use of the word "province" and then the source of the mineral. This word should have been "provenance" which is a fancy word used to indicate the source of the specimen. Now you know, so be careful.

Members Happenings

By Michelle Talcott

The 25th Annual Jasper Chamber of Commerce Azalea Festival was held Saturday, March 16, 2013. Numerous club members participated as vendors and spectators. The beautiful spring weather made for an enjoyable day of activities.

On April 6, The Talcott's (Smooth Talkin' Stones) participated in the Good Oil Days in Humble as a vendor. The day was very enjoyable.

High Country Snowball is in full swing and by the looks of the people waiting in line, word is out that the snow cones are good! Owners Lonnie and Sharon Stalsby want to invite everyone to stop by for a taste. High County Snowball is located on Highway 96, south of Baskins parking lot.

The Nashes have been busy this month - helping out with an Estate Sale conducted by cousins Theresa Belew and Kathy White owners of Jasper Estate Liquidations. A library with books, books and more books and a Norman Rockwell collection including over 200 figurines and more plates than that was John's territory. Lots of fun but also a lot of work involved.

The most rewarding part of the month was spent enjoying being a part of our Granddaughter Brianna's Walker County Fair's 4-H experience. She had four entries in the food categories - won First Place in her division for Miscellaneous Desserts, the dress she made won Second Place and her commercial heifer pen won Sixth Place and was eligible for auction. Needless to say there are some very proud grandparents at the Nash household.

Got word that the Ducotes will be in Houston so that Ron can see one of the specialists there. Good luck Ron. Also got word that surgery has been scheduled for Fred Herron. We will have more information later.

FROM THE SCFMS PRESIDENT

It is time for the yearly Directory of the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies to be published. This year the Directory will be E-mailed. You can make sure that everyone in your club has access to it.

The Directory provides the lists of officers of the SCFMS as well as information on the officers of the individual clubs. The Directory also provides information concerning the programs available to clubs, information on the insurance program, as well as other material beneficial to your club.

Information on current officers and committee chairs was not received from some of the clubs in the SCFMS. The Directory is being published with the best data that was available. Please make the information on the programs provided by the Federation available to your program Chair. This Directory is a great tool for the benefit of your club.

Thanks go to Jonathan Moehring and Margaret and Paul Good for the gathering of the information and providing it to the various clubs. Thanks Paul, Thanks Margaret, Thanks Jonathan.

John D Nash
President, SCFMS

Agate Tips

Candle" Your Agates

We work almost exclusively with the AGATE we collect at the World Famous gravel pit in Souris, Manitoba. Using the "Candle method we are able to "see" the colour and the pattern in the agate so we know which way to slice it to get the best results.

To "candle" your agates: Build a small box--4 sides and a top--NO BOTTOM. Cut a small circular hole in the center of the top. Place the box over a source of light--we use an electric trouble light. Plug in the light, place your agate over the hole and rotate it slowly--this way and that--so you can see the pattern and any fractures. Then mark (with a felt pen) the side you want to cut first.

Trudy & Mel Martin, long time agate pickers via The Lodestone, Oct. 2006