

THE STONE CHIPPER

THE 614TH MEETING OF THE AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, **MAY 24TH, 2007, 7:30 P.M.**, AT THE AGMS CLUBHOUSE, 6719 BURNET LANE, AUSTIN, TX. PHONE: (512) 458-9546.



The May program will be a talk by Dr. Pamela Owen, Senior Paleontology Educator at the Texas Memorial Museum, on "Saber-Toothed Cats in Texas."

**AGMS Annual Show
Gem Capers 2007
Palmer Events Center**

Show Dates: November 30th,
December 1st and 2nd 2007.

www.AustinGemAndMineral.org

THE AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.

The AGMS is a member in good standing of the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies and the American Federation of Mineral Societies. Its editors are also members of SCRIBE. The club address is 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, Texas 78757, and phone (512)458-9546. **The AGMS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.** Visit our website at www.AustinGemAndMineral.org. Contact Craig Brandt for website updates.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the AGMS is to promote interest and education in the various Earth Sciences and other related subjects.

MEETINGS

The Society meets the fourth Thursday of every month except November and December. November or early December is show month and the meeting, if any, is held after show setup on Thursday before the show. December is the Invocation of Officers meeting held on a date and at a place determined by the officers. Board meetings are called as needed. All members are welcome to attend. Society Officers are listed on the back page of this publication. Please feel free to contact any of them for information.

DUES FOR 2007

Membership dues are:

\$15.00 annually for an adult \$20.00 annually for a couple \$4.00 annually for juniors

THE STONE CHIPPER

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All American Club
Awards
AFMS Gold &
Trophy 2002
AFMS Gold 2003,
2004
SCFMS Gold
2002, 2003, 2004

President's Message



I thought my previous message had some merit, but since I had no feedback, I can only guess you are all too busy, or just plain forgot to talk with me about some of the points I brought up. As I get older, I can attest to getting more forgetful myself (or did I always have this problem?). Anyway, I encourage you all to look over my previous message and get back to me on your thoughts. I do value your feedback, and it is a society for all of us (to borrow a phrase from Will Rogers; "I never met a mineral I didn't like.")

I saw a few of you at the Waco show at the last weekend in April. It was a small but good show. I picked up a few items (all fluorescent-related), saw some things I wished I would have bought (they had some good looking malachite for reasonable prices). Saw one or two dealers who might be good additions to our show, and even got a hair cut and beard trim out of it (my wife made me do it). I haven't gone to that many smaller shows or even some of the larger ones in Texas in recent years, but hope to get to more of these. As they say, a bad day at a rock show beats a good day of yard work.

We had a good turnout for the volcanic features of Austin field trip on the 21st. The rain made it more overgrown and the creeks more difficult to cross than last year, but all who attended said it was a good time. I even picked up another 20-pound lava boulder. The talk by Ann Molineux on the Barron Mineral Collection and remodeling plans at the Texas Memorial Museum was interesting, but also sad for some of us. She mentioned they have no plans for having a fluorescent mineral display. I am hoping we can somehow get them to reconsider on this point. Otherwise, the new mineral displays should be interesting, and the displays in the Geology building are worth seeing, if you haven't gone there yet (mainly on the 3rd floor).

There are some interesting and ambitious field trips in the planning stages, and the show committee continues to plan to make the next show memorable. Keep your eyes open for mineral-related items, and if you find them, share them with the rest of us. I just saw on the "Antiques Road Show" on PBS the other night, where they were discussing some

impressive mineral specimens and value. A large tourmaline group from Pala, California was one of the items featured. I know things are out there, so keep looking and sharing.

~Alan Cherepon, President



Library News

Pat yourself on the back club members. We are down to only 5 over due books. Each of those received a reminder phone call on Tuesday. Let's get 100% turn in at the next meeting. No one can check out that great book you just finished if it isn't back on the shelf.

Several new magazines have arrived and are in the process of being shelved. A new magazine has been ordered - *Step by Step Wire Jewelry*. Be sure to keep an eye out for this new addition.

Happy reading!

~Diann Hill & Harriet Strieber, co-librarians

April 2007 Meeting Minutes



Program: Ann Molineux, of the Texas Memorial Museum, presented a program describing how the exhibit of the Barron gem and mineral collection was prepared. She also previewed a web presentation of some of the minerals, with some fantastic photos of the gems and minerals.

Call To Order: The meeting was called to order by Alan Cherepon. Laura Dow moved that the minutes of the March meeting be approved. Susan Postlethwait seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Treasurer: Bob Greenway, treasurer, had nothing to report.

Membership: Susan Postlethwait, reporting for Ron Guzman, said there are 67 members present, three juniors, and two visitors.

South Central Federation: Mac Ellis presented four awards to the club for donations raised by the silent auction to the Federation Scholarship Fund. These were presented in memory of George Browne, who began the silent auction, half of the proceeds of which are donated to the Federation.

Newsletter: Laura Dow said that as of the April newsletter, members who had not paid 2007 dues were not sent a newsletter. She said that she and David would be away in July and she needed someone to volunteer to do a basic newsletter that month.

Laura also said that she needs articles on dinosaurs written by a junior member. One article will be used in the show program, and that the writer of the article chosen will receive a prize.

Show Committee: Susan Postlethwait said the show committee needs ideas for questions for the children at the show. She said that the committee wants members to create a display that shows how fossils form. It will be used at the show every year. A display about volcanoes, with information on nearby locations, is also needed. This should be geared to the fifth grade level.

Junior Committee: Susan Postlethwait said that the Houston club has agreed to let some of our membership observe their teaching methods for juniors and to inspect their workshop. The idea is to get ideas on setting up a junior training program and to review their special safety measures with juniors. She invited club members to join her on May 19 for the trip. The class begins at 10:00 a.m.

Program Committee: Brian Wetzig said he has not scheduled the program for next month yet, and would like anyone with ideas to contact him. He asked if the club would be interested in a program on snakes. Reaction was mixed, but mostly positive.

Historian Committee: Ed Gage said that he needs many more pictures of club activities, field trips, etc.

Workshop: Ed Gage said that not many people are showing up for the workshop on Wednesday evenings. He is at the club house by about 4:30, and if no one has come to work by 7:00 he is leaving.

Field Trips: Alan Cherepon said he had led a trip to volcanic features of Austin on April 21, and that he has guide books if anyone wants one. Clifford Strieber said that the Clifton Quarry trip is scheduled for May 26, and that liability disclaimer forms are required. Finds expected include calcite, marcasite, fossils, including ammonites, and pyrite cubes. Directions and other information will be posted in the *Stone Chipper*.

Sunshine: Kathleen Howard is the new Sunshine person. She asked that anyone with information on members either call her or email her.

Library: Harriet Strieber reported that all donations have been catalogued and the extras are for sale in the cabbing room. She said that, since Diann Hill can't always be available to help, she would appreciate more volunteers to help occasionally. Anyone interested should call her or talk to her after the meeting.

Building: James Lopez asked for volunteer painters to help on Sunday, May 6.

New Business: Ron Carmen said he had presented a proposal to the Board to an exhibitors' and judges' seminar and the Board had approved. The classes would be two days of intensive study, and would be available to anyone in the AFMS. AGMS members would be given first choice to attend. Four members indicated they would be interested in the seminar. Tentative date is in March [2008].

Susan Postlethwait said that Paul Bordovsky's picture is in the current *Rock and Gem* magazine.

Craig Brandt moved and Murry Fly seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed.

~Pauline Denson, Secretary

NOTE: Please send notices of changes of address or to report errors on the mailing list to: **Bob Greenway**, treasurer. To get signed onto the AGMS email list and/or to receive the newsletter via email, please send a note to the editors.

~The Editors

Field Trips



The trip to Clifton scheduled for May 26th, has been postponed per the quarry manager's request. I'll try to reset the date for sometime in June.

~Clifford Strieber, Field Trip Co-member

April Program Review: E.M. Barron Collection

By Laura Dow
AGMS Club Member

The April program was a talk by Dr. Ann Molineux of the Texas Memorial Museum on the process behind properly displaying the E.M. Barron collection of minerals. The museum has a collection of Mr. Barron's mineral specimens and recently decided to do a special presentation of them for display. Dr. Molineux stepped us through the decision trees necessary to create a successful showing of the best and most interesting of the minerals in the most flattering and educational way. During the talk we were also treated to slides of some of the more beautiful minerals.



Fossil SIG News

On May 15th we will hear a talk about "65 Million Years of Penguins" given by **Nina Triche**. Nina has a B.S. in Biology from Tulane University and an M.S. and recently-acquired PhD in Geology from UT (thesis on the skull of a caiman crocodile.) She has worked in the Paleo Lab for 6 years, inventorying and cataloging all our rudist bivalves from Texas and, currently, a Texas freshwater mussel collection. Nina also was a TA for 6 years in the geology and biology departments and has done field work in the coastal ranges of California, the desert of NE Arizona and all over New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming.

~Diann Strout

Sunshine
Committee



I know that not many of you knew **Bill Jennings** but he was a very active member of the San Antonio Gem and Mineral Club. His Memorial was Friday April 27th. His wife of 64 years passed away about 4 years ago and they both never knew an enemy. He may have had a smile on his face but if he gave you that hard glint you better be prepared to answer him in an honest way, because that temper sure didn't let you off any hook!!! He was also a member of the Rollin' Rock Club and a SWFMS past officer. But with Bill, family always came first and he enjoyed the company of all his grandchildren and great-grand children. May all of our warm thoughts go out to his daughter and son and the rest of the family at this time.

~Josie Middleton

Please note that **Kathleen Howard** is the new Sunshine person. She asks that anyone with information on members either call her or email her.

Local Show Announcements

May 26-27

Fort Worth, TX

Fort Worth Gem & Mineral Club
Steve Hilliard, 817-925-5760

Jun 7-10

Roswell, NM

AFMS & Rocky Mt. Federation
http://www.rmfmfms.org/rmfms_2007_show.htm

~From www.lapidaryjournal.com calendar and
www.amfed.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS

I am looking for a sander / polisher. A tool that I could put 4 wheels 3inches wide, with a polish pad on one end is what I envision as my top choice. Because I probably won't get my top choice, I would like to hear about any wheel sander/ polisher that is for sale. You can contact me, Ron Shaner.

A.G.M.S. Calendar

Some Wednesdays - Workshop Open 5:00-7:00 p.m.
(contact Ed Gage for details on Workshop)

May 15 - Fossil SIG Meeting

May 16 - Show Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m.

May 23 - Clubhouse Clean Up (volunteers needed)

May 24 - Club Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Jun 05 - Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Jun 13 - Faceter SIG Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Jun 19 - Fossil SIG Meeting

Jun 20 - Show Committee Meeting 7 p.m.

AGMS Swap Meet

The AGMS Swap Meet was held on Saturday, April 14th on a bright, sunny, and WINDY day. There were not as many AGMS members set up as there are normally, but those of us who were there had a great time. Many people stopped in to shop and look around the club. We all handed out membership applications and talked up the club. Thanks to **Brian Wetzig** for another successful outing!



*Lillian Butler welcomes
all to her booth!*

Photo by Laura Dow

Board Members Anyone?

Anyone wanting to be a board member to please contact Susan Postlethwait, Diann Hill or Clifford Strieber. The hunt is on for next year's new term.

Yard Sale

Matt Dillon of Houston will be having a big yard/rock sale at his home at 1503 Zora, Houston, TX on Saturday, May 19th and Sunday, May 20th from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. It looks like some others will be bringing items by to sell, as well. Anyone still there after 3:30 p.m. will be welcome to join he and his son for a meal at a local restaurant.

Heading To a Show

By Margaret Good
AGMS Club Member

Soon we will go west to New Mexico,
To look at displays and see a great show.
We'll meet many rockhounds we already know.
They'll be really happy with faces aglow.

Paul made a display of things we have found,
In the Land of Enchantment, some on the ground;
In mines, creek bottoms, mountains, places profound;
Kept for displaying as we show them around.

The trip will be eventful, just wait and see,
For days will be sunny; fun it will be;
Comparing our finds, many others and we;
Thus learning to share, fills our lives with glee.

Gold Panning

The next outing/meeting of the Gold Prospectors Association of America, Round Rock Chapter, will be held May 19th - 20th at Malcom Long's Fish and Digs. Directions to Malcom's can be found on their home page at www.roundrockgpaa.com,

They will be electing new officers for the 2007 - 2008 year. There will be a dinner get together Saturday evening. Please bring enough food and drinks for everyone in your group. If you have any questions about the fees and conditions at Malcom's, give him a call. His number is listed on the map.

~submitted by Gene Healy

SHOP TIPS



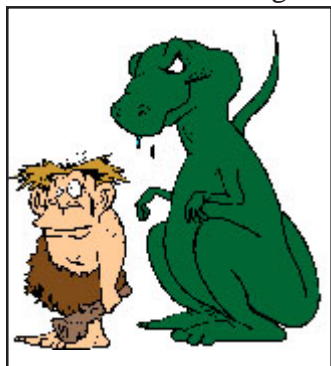
If you plan to collect in an area where poison ivy is known to occur, take along a spray bottle filled with Windex®. Before you enter (walk in) the area, spray your clothing and any bare skin. When you're through, and before entering your vehicle, re-spray yourself and clothing. Donnie says it works; it seems to dry out the ivy oils which are so toxic to many people.
~Courtesy of Donnie Heffley From Sooner Rockologist 02/02, via Post Rock 04/02, Shin-Skinner News 06/05

The Age of Dinosaurs

By J.W. Downs
AGMS Club Member

All of us have dreamed of finding and using a time-machine that would enable us to go back to one of the many "Golden Ages" of the past. We would like to view in real time such things as ancient Greece around 400 B.C., Rome during the reign of Julius Caesar, the Renaissance in Italy, or the Age of Enlightenment so that we could match wits with Voltaire. This would be nice, assuming that language was not a problem. Most of those golden ages occupied a relatively short time period, frequently only a generation or two.

If we set our time machine to take us back to the age of the dinosaurs, there would be a problem. Dinosaurs lived during the three geological periods of the Mesozoic Era that lasted more than 185 million years, nearly three times the amount of time since they became extinct. Many species of dinosaurs evolved, flourished, declined and became extinct long before the end of the age of dinosaurs, leaving little or no fossil evidence of ever having lived.



We tend to collapse our concept of time and to lump things in two categories: Historic and Prehistoric. We know that dinosaurs and "cave men" existed a long time ago and see nothing wrong in science fiction with having them chasing each other. Two versions

of the movie **One Million B.C.** have been made in which dinosaurs, already extinct for more than sixty four million years, did battle with humans. In the movie **Jurassic Park**, DNA was extracted from mosquitoes that had bitten dinosaurs and had immediately become entrapped in amber millions of years ago. Michael Crichton's source of amber didn't come close to being old enough to contain dinosaur DNA. (The dinosaurs shown in that movie were mostly Cretaceous. If they were really from the Jurassic period we would have to go back another eighty million years!)

To put this into a more understandable perspective, we shall engage the services of a number of standard meter sticks. Each meter stick is divided into ten decimeters, one hundred centimeters and one thousand millimeters. Using the scale of one thousand years per millimeter, each meter stick will

represent one million years. At this scale, Christianity would be represented by the first two millimeters, or slightly over one sixteenth of an inch. Alexander the Great would appear at three and one third millimeters, or nearly one eighth of an inch, and Egyptian civilization would be placed at five to six millimeters, or less than a quarter inch.

The end of the last ice age and the extinction of the Woolly Mammoths would be placed at one centimeter, or three eighths of an inch. The people who drew the caves drawings at Altamira, Spain, thirty five thousand years ago, would appear at three and a half centimeters down our scale, or at one and three eighths inches. Three more meter sticks would have to be laid end-to-end to show Lucy, the oldest complete skeletal remains of a human ancestor, at three and a half million years. Lucy would be marked at three and a half meters.

To arrive at the end of the Age of Dinosaurs, we would have to lay out a total of sixty six meter sticks in a line and place a mark at sixty five and one half meters. From our present position on this scale, that point would be placed at two hundred fifteen feet, or about two thirds of the length of a football field. Remember that this marks the end of the Mesozoic era. To include the entire era ruled by reptiles we would have to set out 185 more meter sticks end-to-end. This means that untold numbers of species of these dinosaurs evolved and became extinct without the opportunity of meeting (and eating) their relatives since, in reality, they were displaced in time by millions of year.

We might note here that the fearsome *Tyrannosaurus rex* has used the past 65+ million years to evolve into birds, including the modern chicken. How the mighty have fallen!

Since we have quite a few meter sticks left over, we should use them to continue to show some other milestones in Earth's history. By adding 291 more meter sticks end-to-end, we can show the Paleozoic Era. This will bring the total to 542 meters. We can mark the rise and fall of trilobites, and the rise of sharks and cockroaches which are still with us, extending the length to equal six football fields. To go back to the time that the Earth was formed we would have to set out 4,600 meter sticks, extending nearly three miles (if we haven't already exhausted our supply of meter sticks.) It would require 13,700 meter sticks (8.5 miles) to take us back to the Big Bang.

It is quite all right to enjoy Barney, the benign *Tyrannosaurus rex*, if we keep in mind that the only thing that keeps him from devouring his young admirers is the gulf of at least a hundred million years between them. Also, the **Flintstones** can be very entertaining with their shell telephones, carved stone television sets, woolly mammoth vacuum cleaners, and their small pet dinosaur, Dino. Just remember that the people who prepare these episodes are comedy writers and not paleontologists.

Board Minutes Synopsis May 1, 2007

NOTE: These are synopsis minutes. For full text of board minutes, please contact the club secretary, Pauline Denson.

~Editors

- No update yet from roofer. No update yet regarding the paint cleanup.
- Saw shed painting on Sunday, May 6th.
- Waiting for bid report for large door replacement. James Lopez may be able to do the job. He charges \$25 per hour for labor plus materials. Decided to keep trying for outside bids.
- Dee Fly will scrape the phone number off the front window.
- Decided to get estimates on fixing the sagging front gate
- Possible audit by Austin Energy was tabled for the time being.
- Susan Postlethwait and Ron Carman are working on a judging seminar. They will send fliers to the AFMS and others.
- One of the machines in the workshop is not working. No decision on purchases will be made until after the Houston trip. The faceting machines are working all right. The saws are getting old.
- Person who was to take over the web site has increased his price to \$2,500. Other research yielded prices from \$3,000 to \$3,500 and could do the job in two weeks. Board will check out various examples to decide on next month.
- Show plans are on schedule.
- Two shelves in the display cases are reserved for club members to put in their exhibits for two to three months at a time.
- A faceting class is scheduled to start May 26th, and to go for five Saturdays. Check with Nancy Keller to see if she is still willing to chair this committee.

- Clifton field trip is May 26th [Editors' note, postponed].
- Times the workshop will be open will not be posted on the web site for security reasons. Open days will be limited to two Wednesdays each month.
- Food will be put away thirty minutes after the end of the meeting.
- Six juniors showed up for the field trip last month.
- The library is now getting the magazine *Step-By-Step Jewelry Wiring*.
- Membership is supposed to supply name tags for members without name pins and for visitors. Samples of pins for Ron.
- Need volunteers to serve on the Wall of Fame committee.



Show Talk

Show Committee Minutes Synopsis March 21, 2007

- Scott Singleton will not make it to our show. Jamie Young with Austin Paleontology will talk to members to see what they would like to present. Karen Richards has several pieces that she would display. Ann Molineux said she would display. Contact Pamela Owen to see what can be brought in. Bill and Lois Patillo with the Food Table have committed to Montgomery, AL mineral show for 2007 but they would like to do our show. Karen has two different kinds of mats that she can donate for the cashiers.
- Decided to ask Pattillos with the Food Table to the show. May ask a business to sponsor them and pay for expenses.
- Someone could entertain the children while the teachers are getting tickets and other information. Idea for a table to show from start to finish what happens when you go collecting in the field.
- Need to have some cases that are always at the show, such as the crystal shapes and such. Possibly put some cases together with educational items and just box up at the end of show for the next year.
- Talked to a masseuse about coming to the show. She would probably charge about \$75.00 an hour for a half day minimum. Can bring two tables and another person.

-Teacher Packets – do question sheets for each grade level with balloons for different grade section. Need a tank to blow up balloons. Maybe do teachers gifts to take back to the classroom. Samples of the questions by grade grouping from the Houston show were reviewed.

-Dealer contracts went out March 16th and are due back on April 27th.

-Need new name for Fluorescent Tunnel. Bring suggestions to next meeting to vote on.

-Need to replace lining in cases.

-Grand Prize preview – dinosaur bone. Possibly look at getting someone to polish one part of it.

~Dee Fly, Show Secretary

**Show Committee Minutes Synopsis
April 18, 2007**

-Karen Richards is donating the floor mats for cashier’s and club booth. Need 10.

-New name of Fluorescent Tunnel will be “Illumination Station” but we will add “a Fluorescent Display” description.

-Saw sample for the show pin but had too many pictures and would not reduce down to pin size very well. Will try one dinosaur head and see if that will work.

-Touch table is moving to the North Entrance, the kids will be entering through those doors on Friday. The kids will not be allowed off the bus until the tickets are purchased.

-Feed back from teachers - liked the vendors and displays but did not like all the buses arriving at the same time. Would like to have someone discuss how fossils are formed and where they are found in Central Texas. Gene Healy sent out the little gold book w/letters.

-Paul Bordovsky is going to ask for donations to bring more classes to the show. One business he is looking at is Valero. Discussion on how to recognize their sponsorship.

-Alan Cherepon has a nice rock set that he got from Conoco for the teacher class gift to take back to the classroom. Paul Bordovsky said he will talk to Valero about that also.

-Suggestion for a 15-20 minute talk by different people about things to do with gems and fossils.

-Susan brought sample of the questions by grade grouping from the Houston show and some that she made up in comparison. These were handed out for members to go over and make any changes or other suggestions.

~Dee Fly, Show Secretary



Junior Roundup

Texas Dinosaurs

Juniors take a try at your own “Dino Dig.” As a future paleontologist, see if you can uncover all of these Texas dinosaurs! Can you figure out which one of these dinosaurs is the Texas state dinosaur? *Hint: large herbivorous sauropod that lived during the Early Cretaceous.* And yes, all of these dinosaurs roamed Texas! Happy Hunting!

[Answers next month.]

Z X S O R E S F N R S A A V S P Z S S N C M
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| ACROCANTHOSAURUS | PANOPLOSAURUS |
| ALAMOSAURUS | PAWPAWSAURUS |
| BRONTOPODUS | PLESIOSAUR |
| CAMPTOSAURUS | PLEUROCOELUS |
| CHASMOSAURUS | PROTOHADROSBYRDI |
| COELOPHYSIS | SHUVOSAURUS |
| DEINONYCHUS | STEGOCERAS |
| EDMONTOSAURUS | TECHNOSAURUS |
| HYPSILOPHODON | TENONTOSAURUS |
| IGUANODON | TEXASCETES |
| KRITOSAURUS | TOROSAURUS |
| ORNITHOMIMUS | TYRANNOSAURUSREX |

~Susan Postlethwait, Junior Chair



A.F.M.S. News

This is your final notice about the combined AFMS and Rocky Mountain Federation Show! It will be held in Roswell, NM from **June 5th-10th**. Detailed information was provided in the February 2007 *Stone Chipper* and can also be found at the website, www.rmfmfms.org/rmfms_2007_show.htm.



S.C.F.M.S. News

A reminder that the 2007 South Central Federation Convention and Show will be hosted this year by the Arlington Gem & Mineral Club in Arlington, Texas. The show dates are **September 1-2, 2007**. This will be the 50th annual show for the Arlington club. It will be held at the Arlington Convention Center, 1200 Ballpark Way. The hours are Saturday 10-6, and Sunday 10-5. Go to their web site at <http://tsef.org> for more information.

REASONS WHY THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS HARD TO LEARN

- 1) The bandage was wound around the wound.
- 2) The farm was used to produce produce.
- 3) The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
- 4) We must polish the Polish furniture.
- 5) He could lead if he would get the lead out.
- 6) The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
- 7) Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present.
- 8) A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
- 9) When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
- 10) I did not object to the object

~From the Internet (author not listed), via The Hounds Howl, Chips & Chatter, 02/03, Fredericksburg Rockhounds Newsletter 5/03



Our thanks go to the following for their continued support of the A.G.M.S. by printing out the newsletter for us each month:

Horizon Environmental Services, Inc.
James M. Wiersema, Principal

White Buffalo Turquoise

When discovered in the Dry Creek Mine in the Shoshone Indian Reservation near Battle Mountain, Nevada in 1993, they (the discoverers), were not sure what it was. Because of its hardness, it was decided to have it assayed. Their suspicions proved correct. It was in fact, white turquoise. It was not until 1996, however, that it was finally made into jewelry.

Turquoise gets its color from the heavy metals in the ground where it forms. Blue turquoise forms where there is copper present (most Arizona turquoise). Green turquoise forms where iron is present (most Nevada turquoise). White turquoise, where there are no heavy metals present, turns out to be rare. To date no other vein of white turquoise has been found anywhere else. When this vein runs out that will be the last of it.

~From Rockhound Gazette 1998, others, via Stoney Statements 11/02, The Roadrunner 3/07

Fire Agate
By Jack Brasig

So-called fire agate is actually a chalcedony with a layer of iridescent limonite, which is trapped between layers of chalcedony. The layer may be so thin that it is sometimes less in thickness than a breath upon a window-pane. The deposition of limonite is such that a dense spot is where the best colors are usually dominant. This form of "fire-agate" is almost always botryoidal. Fire agate should be worked with a great deal of caution.

~ From The Rock Rattler 9/88, via The Rockhound Gazette 9/03, via Stoney Statements 7/04, via The Rockytier 8/04

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Happy Mother's Day

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