

The Stone Chipper



646th AGMS Meeting

When: April 22nd

Time: 7:30 PM

Where: AGMS Clubhouse



Field Trip

Hot Springs area of Arkansas

Details of trip on Page 5.



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. The newsletter editor is also a member of SCRIBE. The clubhouse address is **6719 Burnet Lane**, Austin, Texas 78757, and phone (512) 458-9546. The AGMS is a **501(c)(3)** nonprofit organization. Visit our web site at www.AustinGemAndMineral.org. Contact our webmaster for web site updates at WebMaster@AustinGemAndMineral.org.

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 on the **fourth Thursday** of every month except October, which is show set up day. There will be a meeting on the **third Thursday** in November. December is the Installation 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 and Chairpersons are listed on the back page of this publication. Please feel free to contact any of them for more information.

Membership Dues

\$15.00 annually for an adult \$20.00 annually for a couple \$4.00 annually for juniors (under 18)

The Stone Chipper

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The Stone Chipper

Diamond

April Birthstone Color: White or Clear



The traditional, modern and ancient Hindu birthstone for April is the diamond while the mystical birthstone is the opal. This month we will look at the diamond in an article written by Roger K. Pabian.

Although the diamond is probably the most popular and discussed gemstone, it has probably been in use for a shorter time than any of the other gems that are commonly used in modern times. The reason for this is because lapidaries did not learn to fashion diamond until about the 15th Century when it was discovered that one diamond would abrade another.

India is probably the oldest known source of diamonds but South Africa became the major supplier by the late 19th Century. Historic sources of diamond have also been in Brazil. Review of current literature such as Levinson (1998a, 1998b) show that there have been important diamond finds in California, Colorado, Russia, Australia and Canada.

Diamond is composed of the element Carbon — it crystallized in the isometric system; that is, there are three crystallographic axes that are all of equal length and are perpendicular to one another. In addition to the axial relationships, the crystal can have a center of symmetry, 3 axes of fourfold symmetry, 4 axes of threefold symmetry, 6 axes of twofold symmetry, and 9 planes of symmetry. In a mineralogical text, these symmetry elements would appear as: C, 3A₄, 4A₃, 6A₂, 9P.

An isometric crystal can be defined by numerous forms including a cube (6 faces), an octahedron (8 faces), a dodecahedron (12 faces), a pyritohedron (12 faces), tetrahexahedron (24 faces), a trapezohedron (24 faces), etc. To complicate issues, one form may be superimposed over another such as an octahedron modifying a cube such that the cube appears to have its corners cut off. The superimposition of faces can be quite extreme and an isometric crystal can show several forms superimposed over another. All of these different modifications of the basic isometric crystal can exist within a volume that fills a space occupying one unit by one unit by one unit.

The hardness of diamond is 10 on the Mohs Scale — there is nothing harder. The figure 10 could be said represent the “average” hardness of a diamond. Diamond is not equally hard on all of the theoretical crystal faces that exist in the unit cube above. The dodecahedral faces are just slightly softer than the cube faces or the octahedral faces. If the cube or octahedral faces are 10 hard, then we may think of the dodecahedral faces as being 9.999... hard. It is this fact that makes it possible to shape and polish diamonds.

Diamond crystals have 4 perfect cleavages that are parallel to the octahedral crystal faces. These cleavages are useful to the lapidary as they make it possible to reduce a large, irregular shaped crystal to smaller, more manageable pieces. Apparent planes of cleavage where the stone might break easily are usually selected as separation planes when the crystal is cleaved. The cleavage operation is carried out with a specially shaped chisel and mallet. Many diamonds are now treated with a diamond saw rather than cleaving but the skilled diamond worker still must know the art of cleaving a stone as this is the only way some pieces can be handled.

Diamond has a fairly high refractive index: 2.417. That figure measures how much a beam of light is bent and slowed down when it enters the diamond. The high refractive index is what causes the diamond to have its adamantine luster. Diamond has a very high dispersion (0.044), the ability of a substance to break white light down into its component colors. The dispersion is what causes a faceted diamond to show many colors when it is moved about in the light.

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Lapidary hobbyists have finished very few diamonds. There are several reasons for this. First is the availability of rough material. Most of the world's diamonds are sold by a monopoly that makes parcels of stones available to cutting houses at sightings that are held only several times a year. The parcels are priced at several millions of dollars each and there is no high grading. The buyer must buy either all or none. In many instances several cutting houses must act together as one to purchase a parcel of diamonds. This effectively eliminates Corner Lapidary Shoppe from the list of potential buyers.

On rare occasions, a piece of suitable rough diamond might reach the hobbyist. The typical faceting unit that is used by the hobbyist or even a commercial colored stone lapidary won't begin to handle a diamond. A small hobby unit will have a 1/30-horsepower to 1/15-horsepower motor for power. The units used for diamonds have at least a one horsepower motor. The typical hobby unit will have a 6-inch or 8-inch lap whereas the units for diamond will have an 18-inch lap. The shaping and polishing of a diamond generates enough friction that a mechanical dop must be used as dop waxes will melt when diamonds are being fashioned. Neutral oil such as olive oil is usually used to reduce friction in diamond finishing.

Proportions of the finished stone are important to produce the best result. The ideal proportions for a diamond have been determined both experimentally and in practice. If the pavilion is too deep, the center of the stone will appear dark and if is too shallow, the stone will appear washed out.

A diamond appraiser will determine the weight of the properly proportioned stone that can be derived from a finished stone and use that as the weight of appraisal. The cost of refashioning the diamond to a properly proportioned stone is then deducted from the evaluation. This prevents the lapidary from inflating the price of the stone by inflating the weight.

Diamonds are useful for several geological purposes. Petrologists have thought that the tiny inclusions in diamonds that are commonly called "carbon spots" (but rarely are) and include such minerals as pyrope garnet, olivene, and pyrrhotite are tiny samples of the earth's mantle, that zone that is about 30 miles beneath the earth's crust. Thus, inclusions in diamonds may provide some examples of the mantle's makeup. Some geologists have suggested that the distribution of diamonds between continents shows examples of spreading ocean basins and provides strong evidence for plate tectonics.

Compiled by Roger K. Pabian, Research Geologist, Emeritus
School of Natural Resources, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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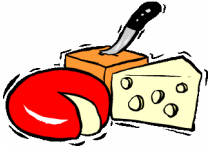


Rough Diamonds

Source: <http://snr.unl.edu/data/geologysoils/birthstones/diamond.asp>

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Refreshments for April Meeting – Volunteers



Tom and Marilyn Bowers
Marilyn Gilbreath

Calendar of Upcoming Events April

- 10 AGMS Annual Swap Meet, held in the AGMS parking lot, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM
- 15 AGMS Show Committee Meeting, 7:00 PM
- 20 Paleontological Society of Austin Meeting, 7:00 PM
- 22 AGMS General Meeting, 7:30 PM
- 23 *Cutoff date for article submissions to newsletter.*
- 24 Discovery Center Grand Opening at Guadalupe River State Park Event



May

- 4 AGMS Board Meeting, 7:00 PM

President's Message



I swear I haven't been this busy since the kids were at home. I am going to school, working a part-time job and doing homework; and at this old age, it is almost not worth it. I enjoyed listening to our speaker until I got a call from home so I missed the last few minutes. Thank goodness both her and her partner are such good speakers, they almost want to make you be out there, in all the elements and mucking around. Only in Texas, we don't have to wear parkas.

I saw quite a few of you in San Antonio. Linda Northcote and I were able to get a few people to donate hard earned cash for the Endowment Fund, which is the main reason we went. I do hope that most of you were able to go to the Topaz Days at the Square in Mason, TX. The Lindsey Ranch and the Seaquist Ranch will also be hosting field trips and they charge fees. Perhaps a few of you will get the chance to come up lucky and find the elusive Texas State Gemstone, known as the Topaz. At least I can say I found one, 2 x 1.5 mm; microscope anyone! Remember this is getting to be the season for snakes to start moving around; so watch your step! Remember to look out for Rattlesnakes, Copperheads, Water Moccasins, and every now and then, Coral Snakes. Also, bring plenty of snacks and water. Don't forget the sunscreen.

Agenda items for the Board: Insurance for our clubhouse and holdings, the SOP rewrite (Standard Operating Procedures), safety issues for the building — exit signs, lights, etc. Our next Board meeting is April 6th. I hope that you can attend.

Next is the Annual Swap Meet to be held on April 10th and it is promising to be really well attended. Let's hope we have the good weather. Don't forget it is "Pot Luck" if you want to eat. Drinks and ice will be provided by the club. Times are posted as 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. See you there!

Field Trips: (intentionally left blank).

~Josie Middleton, President

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Field Trip: Hot Springs area in Arkansas

Member only content.

Donations to Library

Several AGMS members recently have donated books to our library. Many thanks to Mac Ellis for a number of field collecting and road log books, to Grant Gibson for *The Mineralogical Record Index: Vol. 1-14*, to Dalan Hargrave for his new faceting book, *Ribbon Cuts*, and to Andrea Miller for a new copy of *Petrified Wood* by Frank Daniels. These new acquisitions are greatly appreciated.



~Harriet Strieber

March 25, 2010 Meeting

Josie Middleton and Frederick Falk opened the meeting at 7:30 PM by drawing for three door prizes. Door prize winners were Sondra Barnette, Gene Healy and Les Postletwait.



Program: Dolores van der Kolk narrated a slide show, Northern Exposure: Geology of the Lower Cretaceous Pebble Shale Unit in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and Surrounding Areas. The Pebble Shale Unit, exposed only in the wildlife refuge, is the subject of her geologic study and thesis. Peter Flaig, field assistant, was also present.

Call to Order: Josie Middleton called the meeting to order at 8:45 PM.

Committee Reports:

Field Trips: Ron Carman will lead a field trip to Arkansas that will include multiple collecting sites near Hot

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Springs. A day of travel is required both up and back. Sunday, May 16th through Thursday, May 20th were the dates mentioned, but be sure to check Ron's write-up in The Stone Chipper and the AGMS List to confirm the ending date and get additional trip details.

Education/Classes: James Lopez announced that he has sign-up sheets at the back table for two classes: Use of the Slab Saw and Flute Carving. He displayed samples of flute carving. Joyce Hrapsky reminded that the board has not yet approved the classes; however, those interested in taking the classes can also sign up by sending her an e-mail.

Program: Kathleen Howard said that flyers for the Swap Meet on April 10th are available to hand out. Josie clarified that selling should not begin before 9:00 AM. The club will provide sodas; bring your own potluck food if you plan to eat.

Annual Show: Brian Wetzig urged members who have tumblers to please tumble rocks for the Gem Capers' Gem Mine. Deadline for designs for the 2010 show pin is July 15th — petrified wood is the theme. If you have any interest in acquiring show pins from prior years, please contact Brian.

Hospitality: Sue Postlethwait reported that one more volunteer is needed to bring food to the April meeting. For the Swap Meet, she said that the club would provide sodas, coffee, ice, and chips.

Historian: Ed Gage sent an appeal for photographs for the yearbook.

Library: Diann Hill reported that three of the missing dinosaur books came home. Library security details are being worked out; more to follow.

Membership: 54 members (including one new member) and 4 visitors attended.

Newsletter Editor: Frederick Falk would like to have all items in by Friday, the day after the general meeting.

Sunshine: Josie reminded members to e-mail Ron Guzman if they know of club members who need a caring contact.

Show and Tell: Diann Hill showed a petrified log from Libya that she will display at the Gem Capers show.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

~Marilyn Gilbreath, Secretary



New Member
Celeste Parker

Board Meeting Minutes

The AGMS Board met on March 2, 2010 to discuss club business. Below is a listing of the highlights of this meeting. A complete set of minutes is available upon request.



Minutes: The February minutes were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report: Pauline Denson brought copies of the budget showing actual January and February income and expense amounts.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) – Reset Date: Two new dates have been established to work on the SOP revisions: 7:00 PM Tuesday, **April 6th** (as part of the regular Board meeting agenda) and 7:00 PM Tuesday, **April 13th** (SOP only).

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Insurance Issues: Richard Dorsey stressed that we are under insured on the building. He has provided his recommendations to Pauline and she reports that she will investigate the three local agents he named. We are covered on the trailers because our current insurer was notified, but there is still no word on the cost.

Nominating Committee: Charlotte Morris reported that the committee would review people who have served and the number of years they served. Gef Fisher was added to the committee.

Workshop: Revisit Arbor Issue from Years Ago: James Lopez said that several years ago the Board voted to purchase one arbor a year. He said it is difficult for five students in a class to complete their cabbing projects, as there are only two machines you can go on from start to finish. Some of the expanding drums are not functioning correctly, and we need a 1,200 grit belt for the Diamond Gem. Pauline provided excerpts from the minutes of five board meetings in 2007 relating to equipment issues during the period that Ed Gage served as shop manager and when Gef Fisher took over; there was no mention of a vote to purchase one arbor a year. A motion passed authorizing ordering belts to fix the machines — not to exceed \$500.00. A second motion passed to table the discussion of purchasing new arbors until the 2011 budget preparation.

Syllabus for Cabbing Class: Kathleen Howard presented a syllabus for a 4 session cabbing class (dates and times not set). A motion passed to approve the syllabus as printed with the exclusion of the supplies list.

Survey: Regarding the recent survey of members' capabilities, Kathleen Howard said she could teach geology and mineralogy.

Swap Meet: Per Josie, there are 30 tables available in the shed if needed.

Slab Saw Class: Joyce Hrapsky reported that Gef Fisher is available to teach slab saw classes using Robert Morriss' already approved syllabus. A motion carried to approve Gef Fisher to teach classes on slab saws on the condition that doing so does not conflict with his workshop duties.

New Members Packet: Joyce Hrapsky suggested that we prepare some tips on how things are done at club meetings (such as: the food is for after the meeting, and cell phones should be silenced). Frederick Falk reported that he and Eunice Young had ideas for a packet. A motion passed to allow Frederick Falk, with a committee of his choosing, to prepare a new members packet and revise the membership application as necessary; to be brought back for Board review no later than the May Board meeting.

Trailer Packet: A trailer information packet with keys to the door of one of the trailers was turned over to Pauline Denson to be stored in the safe.

Order of General Meeting and Meeting Time Change: Joyce said many members are going for refreshments before the end of the meeting. Frederick added that the meeting order should be revised to let people with children leave after the program. A motion was approved that the meetings begin at 7:00 PM and that the speaker be 1st, refreshments 2nd, business meeting 3rd effective at the June meeting.

Sergeant-at-Arms: Discussion: There is often a lot of loud talking or other noise outside the meeting room that disturbs the speaker's presentation and/or the meeting. A motion carried that this Board consider establishing a Sergeant-at-Arms position.

Locks and Fire Inspection: David Wenger reported that he spoke to Lt. Knight at the fire department. They will do a free inspection walk through. A motion passed that authorized David to have a fire inspection on March 8th, and place his report of the inspection in the *Stone Chipper* for the record.

~Marilyn Gilbreath, Secretary

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Show Committee Report

The Show Committee met on March 18, 2010 to discuss the upcoming Gem Capers 2010 show. Below is a listing of the highlights of this meeting. A complete set of minutes is available upon request.

Lynn advised Brian that they purchased a petrified wood bookend set for the Grand Prize. Brian will contact her as we need photographs taken.

Brian asked his wife (Jill) if she would produce the show bulletin and she said she would but would not do the advertising. Brian will get with Lynn about what she did with the advertisers.



“Show Pin Contest” for the show pin design is open for anyone’s design. Announcement of the contest was made at last meeting and will be announced again at the next meeting. The show theme this year is Petrified Wood.

Palmer is going to have construction going on before the show and for a couple years after. A big ditch will be dug around the center which will hinder where the buses usually drop the kids off.

Tumbled stones, tumbled stones, where art thou tumbled stones? The Gem Capers show needs multiple, multiple, multiple buckets of tumbled stones and there are only 7 months left to get those tumblers producing.

Show Committee chairpersons still needed:

- **School Bus Chair** (Directs the places where buses drop off kids)
- **Show Bulletin Advertiser** (Contacts companies to see about their continued advertising or even finding some new advertisers.)
- **Transportation Chair** (Helps coordinate the vehicles moving the trailers to and from the show.)

Anyone wanting to help get stuff ready for the show meet us every third Thursday at 7:00 PM for the Show Committee meeting. There are lots of things to do to get ready for the show and this is one of the best ways to find out what you would like to do within the club to help out with the annual show.

~Dee Fly, 2010 Show Secretary

Reginald Rockhound Retires

Reggie is retiring. His full name is Reginald Rockhound. Actually Reggie isn’t the one retiring. It is his creator that is retiring. So what is the story on Reggie and why is it of interest to us?



Prior to 1979, two Rockhounds, Diane Ford and Joan Peck, would share the fun of parading around at gem and mineral shows in their own costumes that resembled a dog that also could be a Rockhound. This brought a lot of pleasure to the youngsters, young and old, at the shows. As the two thought about other ideas of helping to support the interest in the Rollin’ Rock Club (RRC), Reggie was born. In 1979 Diane created a small plaster dog to represent a Rockhound. The dog was placed on a crystal base. Also added was a small sphere for Reggie to roll. Thus the rollin’ rock to tie Reggie in with the Rollin’ Rock Club.

Reggie, along with his crystals and sphere, evolved into a small display about 10 inches square and 12 inches high, mounted on a wooden base that Diane wanted to use to raise money for the AFMS Scholarship Fund and only for that Fund. She had great suggestions from people like Don Langston, past AFMS President, and Rusty Mercer as to how to accomplish this goal. The Reggie display would be taken to RRC unofficial meetings usually held on Sunday mornings prior to the opening of the club show in the SCFMS. Besides the Reggie auction

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the RRC also holds auctions, using member's donated material, at these meetings in order to raise money for its treasury, SCFMS Endowment Fund, AFMS Endowment Fund and Scholarship Fund, and other educational benefactors or institutions. Items are donated to the regular auction by members attending the show and they decide which organization will receive the money.

So at nearly every RRC meeting Reggie would be auctioned off to the highest bidder. That bidder could only keep Reggie long enough to take him to the next show. Thus Reggie attended many shows in the SCFMS, some in the RMFMS and a few at shows in other Federations. At each show he was auctioned again and the new winner had to get him to the next show so he could be auctioned off again.

People like Keith Harmon, Don Langston, Delbert Speed, Ed Ries, Howie Whiting and Bill Pattillo would have been auctioneers and would auction off Reggie to the highest bidder. Reggie couldn't make all the club shows as sometimes several shows would be on the same weekend. So many times he would be auctioned off in absentia. The invisible Reggie would be held up high so everyone could "see" him and then the auction would continue as members bid on the absent Reggie. All the money would go either to the restricted or unrestricted AFMS Scholarship Fund.

The RRC has one official meeting each year at the same show as the SCFMS annual meeting. At that meeting all of the names of the past winners of the current Reggie are placed in a hat and a name is drawn. That person gets to keep that Reggie. Also at the past twenty-nine official RRC meetings Diane has presented a new Reggie created from her creative ideas. And the bidding for this new one starts again. In order to help Diane, others, like Dick Rathjen, would help her by making the display cases and wood bases for the displays.

Many of the Reggie cases now are residing in the Arlington, TX clubhouse repository so they can be viewed by other Rockhounds. That's where the Reggie that I won is now residing.

Over the years since 1979 Diane has made a total of 30 Reggies. Reggie number 30, Diane's last one, is still being auctioned at the RRC unofficial meetings at many of the shows in the SCFMS and a few in the RMFMS and sometimes at meetings in other federations. The drawing of the winner from the hat for this, the last Reggie, will take place at the official RRC meeting in DeRidder, LA in December 2010.

So what has Reggie done for the AFMS Scholarship Fund? Records available for the past eleven years show that \$12,980.50 was raised by Reggie for the Scholarship Fund. Last year Reggie raised \$1,380.00. And the year before \$1,210.00 was raised by Reggie. I'm not sure what the total amount would be from all the auctions during the life-span of Reggie. My estimate is the total dollars raised by Reggie since the first auction may be around \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00.

Yes, Reggie brought in a lot of money for the Scholarship Fund, but he did something else too. He brought about a lot of friendly and competitive bidding with all sorts of humor thrown in to make the bidding event something members looked forward to having as an enjoyable event at the RRC meetings. Friendships were made and grew closer in a gentle rivalry to "own" a Reggie.

An idea was born to help the Scholarship Fund in a small way and over the years grew to be a big hit. Many thanks are due to Joan Peck for her getting the idea started and to the annual effort of Diane Ford for designing and crafting Reggie to raise money for the AFMS Scholarship Fund. Also, a lot of thanks go to the many people who donated money by bidding on Reggie!

*~Emerson Tucker, AFMS President
Reprinted from AFMS March 2010 Newsletter*

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AGMS membership cards will be available at the April general meeting.

A thought to all Rockhounds in the South Central Federation



If you recall we had a note about this challenge in the September–October, 2009 issue of this Newsletter. Emerson Tucker’s challenge to rockhounds to help the Scholarship Fund to raise more money for the students selected in 2010, is not something new.

Remember in 2002, Isabella Burns, then president of AFMS, had a goal to raise 1,000,000 pennies. She had a “Wishing Well” at the National AFMS/SCFMS Convention in Arlington. By October of that year, \$11,393.63 plus was contributed to the Scholarship Fund.

Again in 2005, Keith Harmon, SCFMS Past President challenged the Regional Federation to make up the difference in the available funds for the AFMS Scholarship awards. A total of \$12,000.00 was needed to meet the difference. The SCFMS donated \$11,011.34. The total from the six federations was \$23,998.96.

Rockhounds in the past have met the challenges and rockhounds can do it today. The amount needed at this time is only \$5,000.00.

Together we can do it. So let’s get together and do it.

*~Paul W. Good, South Central Federation Newsletter Editor
Reprinted from SCFMS January–February 2010 Newsletter*

Poem: Spring has Arrived

*Though it seems still like Winter, the Spring has truly come
So now is the time to get your tools and plans in shape
Preparing for those hunting trips for gem and mineral fun
To pick up more precious stones with which you then can make
A special item for display, or jewelry you can wear
Perhaps a lamp or table top, just something you can see
To show the work that you can do, showing others that you care
About your hobby you have learned, studying geology*



*~Margaret Good, AGMS member
March 21, 2010*

Discover Center Grand Opening



Wendy Womack, Interpretive Planner for Texas Parks and Wildlife, is hosting an event at the Guadalupe River State Park on April 24th. It’s a grand opening event for a small children’s museum she planned and installed there, combined with an Earth Day celebration. They hope to have around 1,500 people and 20 presenters. She has invited our club to come and present a show and tell around gems and minerals, focusing on how they are made. The event is from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM and a free hot dog lunch and water will be provided to all of those that participate. If you are interested in helping out with this event, please contact me.

~Wing Evans, School Programs Chair

Austin Gem and Mineral Society

For membership information write: AGMS, 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX 78757

2010 Officers

President: Josie Middleton
First V. P.: Jackie Fisher
Second V. P.: Kathleen Howard
Secretary: Marilyn Gilbreath
Treasurer: Pauline Denson

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Board of Directors

Term expires Dec. 2011

Robert Morriss
David Wenger
Jeff "Stretch" Young

Term expires Dec. 2010

Tom Bowers
Joyce Hrapsky
Louis Lee

Newsletter Awards

2009 – 1st place AFMS, 1st place SCFMS

Committee Chairpersons

Annual Show	Brian Wetzig
Building Chair	Bob Greenway
Display Cases	Jackie Fisher
Education/Classes	Joyce Hrapsky
Federation/Conservation	Paul Good
Field Trip Committee	Ed Gage
Historian	Ed Gage
Hospitality	Susan Postlethwait
Junior Advisor/Programs	Vacant
Library Co-chair	Diann Hill
Library Co-chair	Andrea Miller
Membership	Eunice Young
Newsletter Editor	Frederick Falk
Program	Kathleen Howard
Scholarship	Jeff "Stretch" Young
School Programs	Wing Evans
Sunshine	Ron Guzman
Workshop	Gef Fisher

April 2010

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