



Mid-TENN Gem'ers

VOL 25 NO 03 • March 2003

Newsletter of
The Middle Tennessee Gem
and Mineral Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 1256
Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1256

OFFICERS

President

Steve Henegar
615 896-1472

1st VP &

Program Chair
Bob King
615 754-0095

2nd VP &

Newsletter Editor
Ingrid Regen
615-463-2163

Secretary

Paula Vance
931 393-2491

Treasurer

Will Smith
615 366-1022

Past President

Lewis Elrod
615-893-8270

DIRECTORS

1 year: Max Grimes
931 393-2491

2 year: Bill Buckner
3 year: Ken Swann

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The Prez Rambles On...

Good news folks. We have a field trip planned for this month to hunt Paintrock Agate. See page 2 for details. Plans are to have several field trips this year.

The Geology dig at West Elementary will be held on May 2nd. Bob and Tina King are the organizers for this event. All the fourth grade classes (Tina teaches fourth grade) participate in the dig. I think there are normally 80 - 90 students that are willing participants. It is a very exciting event for the students, teachers and volunteer parents. Several of our club members have volunteered to help for the past two or three years. I can tell you it is very rewarding to see these young students WOW at the fossils, minerals, tumbled stones and geologic cupcakes.

The dig consist of several activity stations. At one, the students search for fossils like a person would do in a real field dig. They have a grid over their fossil site (a plastic tub with fossils hidden in soil) which is used to map and record in a journal the location and type of fossils found. Another station uses cupcakes, baked with different colors of batter, to demonstrate geologic strata. The students core drill the cupcakes and examine the different strata layers before they get to eat the whole geologic sample. Another station is in a huge air inflated tent, shaped somewhat like a whale, and has marine fossils they can collect. The whale is a reminder of the ancient sea environment where these fossils were found.

Other activity stations include cracking a geode open to be the first human to see inside; mining their own mineral specimens; fluorescent minerals; different mineral forms (they will handle different types of crystals, massive minerals, test for hardness, and see the different colors minerals can be, even different colors in the same type of mineral); and, they will get to pick out and identify tumble polished stones.

If you would like to volunteer about four hours on Friday, May 2. Please let me (615 896-1472) or Tina King (615 754-0095) know. Bob, Tina, and volunteers put a lot of work into the dig. It's a lot of fun watching the students and answering their questions. Plan to come help out!

The MTG&MS, Inc. is a non-profit educational society dedicated to the study and enjoyment of the earth sciences. We are open to the public for the education of all who wish to attend. Society membership is open to persons interested in the earth sciences. Applications are available on request.

Meeting Dates for 2003

March 20th

April 17th

May 15th

June 18th

July 17th

August 21st

September 18th

October 16th

November 20th

December 18th

Dues Due!!!

Dues are \$12.00 for the first person of each household and \$2.00 for each additional family member. Dues are payable January 1st and are prorated in April, July and October. Check the upper right hand corner of your address label for the year you are paid through. If it says 2002, you will not receive next months newsletter unless you send in dues.

Send dues to:

Will H. Smith
5304 Bellcrest Dr
Antioch, TN 37013

~ cont'd on page 2

Please note the Annual Dig and Barbeque at Graves Mountain Georgia is coming up on May 2-4, 2003. The mine caretaker is sponsoring this dig. A barbeque dinner will be served on Saturday. There will be a small fee to cover the expenses of opening the mine to a large group as well as a small fee for the barbeque dinner. Folks this is a world class dig site. There are around thirty different minerals that can be found. The most abundant are lazulite, kyanite, pyrite, rutile, hematite, pyrophyllite, and a host of others. This trip is not for anyone under 18 due to inherent dangers present in open pit mines, such as steep walls. Let me know if you would like more details.

Lewis Elrod is entering our club in the American Federation All American Club contest. If you take pictures at any of our activities, or have first hand knowledge of some of our activities and can fill out a brief form, please contact Lewis (615 893-8270). Our work with two senior centers, our show, our scholarships and other activities certainly qualify this club for a high award. It does require some work to put it all together. Please contact Lewis if you are willing to help.

Be thinking about volunteering to write an article for the newsletter next month. I will be asking at the meeting for someone to volunteer. I'd like to have someone each month. Member written articles make the newsletter much more interesting and makes Ingrid's job as editor easier. Won't you do your part to help out in this endeavor.

One other thing. If you haven't already done so, please take care of paying your dues. Your address label should tell you if you are a 2002 or 2003 member. If your dues haven't been paid by April, we will have no choice but to drop you from our mailing list.

Enough rambling. See you at the meeting.

Steve



BOARD MEETING - February 20, 2003

Quorum was present.

The rest of the board was informed by our new president that two weeks ago four of the board members met and voted to triple their salaries to compensate for lousy weather. We okayed it (let's see, $3 \times 0 = \dots$) Will gave us a copy of the proposed budget to look over during the intervening weeks. We found out that Vandy just recently acknowledged receipt of their scholarship letter - it got buried on someone's desk for several months. Lewis moved to authorize Ken Swann and Joe Powell to bid on some of the Tom Malone collection for the Sr. Citizen Lapidary classes, Ingrid seconded with unanimous approval. Will informed us of some self-reimbursements for expenses incurred during the building of the Tullahoma classroom, Federation dues, etc. Lewis moved to approve the action as presented, Bill seconded with unanimous approval. Ken needs a petty cash fund established for the Tullahoma classroom, Lewis moved to approve \$200 petty cash slush fund, Bill seconded with unanimous approval. Lewis then moved to establish a \$200 petty cash fund also for Ingrid as newsletter editor. Bill seconded, with unanimous approval. Then BILL moved to give Will authority to reregister the Corporate Annual Report. This time Paula seconded, with unanimous approval again. (I'm glad we get along so well...)

INGRID NEEDS ARTICLES!!!! Steve wants to do the article contest again this year, for "show bucks" again, as it proved pretty successful and popular last year. Ingrid so moved, Lewis seconded, with unanimous approval. Bill announced that he and French were teaching 3 classes next Friday, with bunches more in the works. Ken lobbied for greater active club participation, i.e. we need field trips. We decided on March 22, a hunt for anything you can find, with details during the March program. We need a committee to find us places to go. Several members' names were tossed out, and those will probably feel the tap on their shoulders soon. Lewis will get the lowdown on the Dixie Group and its requirements. Bob and Tina made it in, with a TESTA letter of thanks for the help

**Did You
Know
that...**

In Ancient Rome, blue agate was ground into a powder and when mixed with water, it was used as a snakebite remedy.

The ancient Romans also believed a gift of Amethyst by a matron to her husband would ensure his love and fidelity.

In Victorian times, garnet was a favored stone in women's jewelry, as it symbolizes fidelity.

with last year's program. They want to focus on fossils this year, and need 150 kits. Lewis moved to approve expenditure of up to \$500 for this year's project. Ken seconded, with U. A. Lewis was reimbursed for the purchase of Utah Mining History copy. Applications for membership were approved for Heloise and Norman Kendrick of Winchester, Bobbye Hammond of Nashville, Blue and Swan Lobo of Thompson's Station, and Julia Stewart of Franklin. Welcome, all. Meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Paula Vance - Secretary*

GENERAL MEETING

Meeting was called to order at 7:32 by our new president Steve Henegar! Terri Goodrich of Murfreesboro, Heloise and Norman Kendrick, and Ricky and Vicky Lawrence from Statesville were welcomed as first timers. The meeting hall was all excited and so happy to see BARBARA ELLIS once again in our midst. Ingrid Regen was congratulated on a superb newsletter job. Steve announced that we will once again be having the newsletter article contest this year, with prizes of \$50, \$30 and \$20 "show bucks" as enticements for the general membership to give Ingrid ARTICLES. Steve will be naming names and volunteering people to write an article every month if he hears Ingrid complaining. (Boy am I scared, that's why I volunteered to be the first!) No Paula, the minutes don't count.

Will Smith announced a field trip for 3/22/03 to "Saw Mill". Anyone wanting to go, be at Pelham Stuckey's before 8:30 a.m.

DUES ARE DUE!!!!

Lewis passed around a rock for us to guess at, and we were reminded that June Miller's birthday was coming up February 29 - I guess that makes her about 12 years old now? Stamp fund drawing was then conducted, with donations by Harry Howland, Ruth and French Gothard, Bill Buckner, and Paula to the Max. Thank you all. If you would like to have your newsletter sent to you via e-mail, please give or email Ingrid (ingrid@dimp.com) your e-mail addy.

Bob King announced Professor Ogden's return next month for our program, and May to be a rock swap event. He then presented Russian and Czech scientists as bear researchers and ended up claiming that the check was in the mail... double groan. As he was also Man on the Rockpile this month, he gave us his history of getting started with rocks and minerals. He passed around some stones brought from New Zealand. The Crystal was then passed to French Gothard.

Bob Meeks donated "A River Runs Through It" to our Library. Thank you, Bob. The meeting then was adjourned for the auctioning bedlam to begin of Tom Malone's collection. More than one person got very lucky. Paula had to leave at that point so if anything else happened Ingrid can add it on to the bottom of this.

*Respectfully submitted,
Paula Vance - Secretary*



March 22nd Paint Rock Agate Field trip



No you are not dreaming! Our club is going to have a field trip and it is going to be for Paint Rock Agate at what we call the Saw Mill. We will be working the area above and below the road, where the road cuts through the 1400 foot level. You should not expect too much since what we find there is 2" x 3" x 1" agates which have fractured off a larger agate. It will be scattered, but what you find will be beautiful with clear and color. Should be an easy dig. More info at the March meeting.

On March 22nd, be at Stucky's at the Pelham Exit on I24 by 9 AM, since we will leave by 9:15 AM. Stucky's has a great breakfast at a great price so it's a good place to get the fuel for digging.

If radar indicates heavy rain at or near the Hillsboro area by 7:30 AM, then the trip will be called off. Since we will be driving to the site rain will not be a problem, but we don't want to be out unless we can have fun. If we have to call it off then we will try to do the trip on April 5th same time and place.

You will need tools to dig with, something to put your agate in, food and drink, along with what ever the weather requires. We will want to be respectful of the site by keeping it clean and leaving it as we find it, less some agate.

Only members of the club are eligible to attend.

Joe Powell, Will Smith, and Ken Swan will be your guides to success.

The Smithsonian Institute

by Paula Vance

At the February meeting I volunteered to write an article for this month's newsletter. As time has once again flown with having so much fun, I have yet to get a reply from Smithsonian giving permission to reprint things I have found. If it ever comes, I will hopefully be able to give entire texts of some of the research described herein.

Seems the Smithsonian Institute Bureau of Ethnology conducted an exhaustive research project on the Native American tribes beginning around 1880, running a volume about every two years, up into or past the late 1920's. Apparently the Smithsonian really wanted to document the ways of the Native Americans before it was all lost. My mother, whom some of our members know, owns a bookstore in Tullahoma and acquired many of the volumes, complete with original hand water-colored plates in incredible detail. Anyway, in perusing these volumes, occasionally we run across detailed descriptions of how minerals were used by the various tribes, their methods of making adornments and tools, etc. So far I have copied a report on the use of galena, and a several-page description on native silver smithing. (These several pages are full of rather tiny print, extremely difficult to read at times.)

These volumes are amazing in their details of descriptions of all aspects of Native American life in the various tribes. The pictures are original hand watercolored drawings, and are absolutely gorgeous. No, the volumes are not for sale, they will eventually become mine if I outlive my mother. However, if anyone would like to look at them,

all are welcome to come to Tullahoma and visit Barclay Books on South Jackson Street. This really is not an ad for my mother's bookstore, these books are a real treat to see. Hope to see some of our members there someday, and if I ever get permission I'll submit some of the articles in toto. Thanks.

E-bay... What do I bid?

by Will Smith

Need a saw, grinder, rough, or slabs? Well, E-bay is the place to find it. If you search on ebay for agate, you can see over 5000 items at auction with agate in the title. Out of that number could be some great rough or slabs.

Is it safe for me to bid? YES, but you have to understand the risk. The old saying "Buyer Beware" applies. Over the years I've purchased many items, from a simple book on crystal radios to a fishing boat and recently a Buick Park Avenue. I've never had any problem, but I try to understand my risk before I bid or pay. If you pay by credit card using PayPal or BillPay you get more protection than if you pay by cash or money order. I do not pay by cash or money order.

What should I look for? First, look at the number following the seller's ID. This tells you how many items he or she has sold. If not many, do not bid. Next go to the Seller's "feedback" which shows the feedback from past buyers. Read a few and always any negative. If there is no feedback or too many negative, do not bid. View seller's other items which will tell you if this is a big dealer or just someone like you and me. Always check since the seller may have other items you're interested in.

By using PayPal or BillPay you get someone who can go back on the seller if you're not happy or do not receive your item. They will resolve problems by keeping the seller from doing business through them in the future. For sellers who do large volume, they need these services to be successful.

What am I bidding on? This is key, because the most you can expect is what you see or read about the item. Be a detective and search out the truth about the item. If you do not find what you need click on "ask seller a question". This is always good if the seller does not list the amount of shipping and handling, which can be high with some of the smaller sellers or how they make a little more profit.

How does the auction work? First, the seller will list his item(s) with the auction ending in so many days, which you will see at the top of the page. This is a real key to your success, which I will explain below. Second, the seller will list the quantity of items up for auction. Generally it is only one, but at times you will see more than one so you need to determine what your price will be if you bid. Most of the time, in this case, if you bid, you're one of the winners. Third the seller will list info on shipping and the item up for bid. Most do not price the shipping since they do not know the cost until they know the zip code of the winning bidder, but generally a question to the seller will give you an idea of the cost. **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** read the seller's description of the item and look closely at all pictures, if any. I generally do not bid if no picture is provided. Fourth, when you place your bid, you may bid more than the minimum bid which is indicated down at

the bottom of the page. This is IMPORTANT since it means that I can bid the amount I'm actually willing to pay for the item (considering what I've got to pay for shipping), but realizing that my bid will only be the minimum bid needed each time someone else bids, until the bid closes or until they out bid me.

How do I win the bid? This is the most important part. NEVER bid until the last 30 seconds of the bid. If you do you are bidding against yourself. If you watch the bidding, you will see three or four bids during the last minute of a bid so if you bid before that time you're just running up the price of the bid even if no one else has bid. I have a fast Internet connection so I place my bid well over the minimum bid during the last minute of the bid, but do not hit the enter button until 15 seconds before the end. This keeps other bidders from seeing my bid and increasing it before the bid closes. Most of the time it will work, but sometimes the other bidder knows this trick and is willing to pay more and makes a larger bid and wins. Also, a few times, I've contacted the seller and determined what the person would take for the item at that time and got him to agree to halt the bid and give me the deal.

To bid using Ebay, you must provide them with information which I feel is safe and protected. To use a credit card, you will have to register with PayPal or BillPay and they will want to certify you by knowing your bank account. I find that to be OK since all they are trying to do is determine you are who you say you are. They do this by sending a small deposit to your bank account you list in the registration process. Once they make this deposit they will ask you to confirm

the amount and once you contact the bank for this amount, you e-mail the amount back to PayPal. Recently they have changed their process and if you do not tell them to use your credit card each time you authorize a payment, they will take the funds out of your checking account. I don't like this, but most auctions only accept PayPal so not much choice. With PayPal you have to authorize it and they notify you once the payment has been made to the seller.

It works well and can be fun. It can also get out of hand like any auction. Use it to buy what you need, but do your homework before you bid. Determine the max amount you're willing to pay including shipping, and then stick to your plan. It's easy to get in the rhythm of bidding and the next thing you know you have purchased a number of items you do not need.

The only problem I've ever had was buying slabs. Most of the sellers use a scanner to get a picture of the slab and they are generally wet. In a few cases what I've received did not look anything like the picture on the Internet. I'm not sure why, but most of the slabs are offered by dealers and they are more than willing to refund your money if you're not happy with the item received.

So good bidding, except if you see that the High Bidder is whsinc. Don't bid, that's me!!!



Young Rock Hounds

by Frech Gothard and Bill Buckner

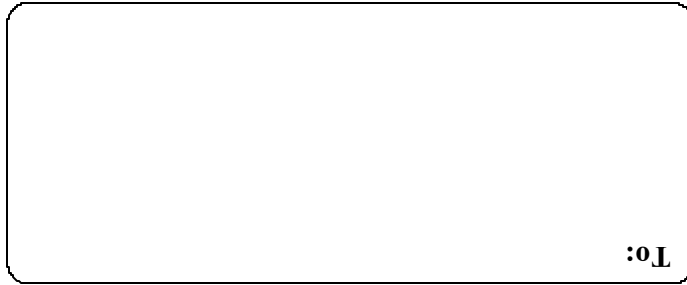
Friday, February 28, 2003 the third grade classes at Andrew Jackson Elementary School each received a session on Rocks and Minerals. The classes were forty-five minutes long. Two MTGMS members, French Gothard and Bill Buckner, taught 3 classes each. They brought a display of rocks and minerals from Tennessee and other states.

French's display included finished cabochons and some pieces set in mountings so the children could see the end result. Field collecting, identification, and starting one's own collection were also discussed. The children

were allowed to handle the specimens and even put a damp sponge on them. One sample was a large tumble polished moss agate from Sweet Water River in Wyoming which fluoresced a vibrant green under ultraviolet light due to manganese in the rock.

Bill explained the 10 hardness levels, and showed specimens. The highlights for the children in Bill's classes were a piece of lead crystal

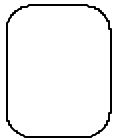




To:

Forwarding and Address Correction Requested

First Class
Postage



Nashville, Tennessee 37212
c/o 2510 Essex Pl

Middle Tennessee Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.

Next Meeting:
Mar 20th

Place:

Farm Bureau
818 S Church St
Murfreesboro, TN

Time: 7:30 PM

Prof. Ogden

Film & Discussion

Board Meeting:

6:30 PM

glass cut like a diamond and the demo of the elastic quality of mica.

About 25 to 30% of the children indicated they had personal rock collections.

At the end of each session, Bill and French both had the teachers pass out pendant necklaces with a polished rock mounted. Most rocks were agate, jasper, topaz, and some fossils. The polished stones and gold colored mountings that were glued on with epoxy were furnished courtesy of MT-GMS. Bill furnished and passed out to the teachers and principal, four gold wire wrapped pendants.

The children, approximately 120, were attentive and interested. Many

of them appear to be budding rock hounds. One of Bills teachers told him that she learned a great deal about rocks & minerals from his presentation.



Swap and Shop

For Sale: Rough Rock \$1.00/lb - 100 lbs. for \$85.00. Your pick, Jasper, Agates, Tampa Bay Coral, etc. June Miller (931) 598-9740.

For Sale: 18 lb Tumbler \$75, Cab makers. Cab Mate, sanding belts & disk, tumbling grit & polish, sphere machines, grinding wheels, flat lap machines, and a whole lot more at low prices. Call for info. George Jones (615) 333-3781) 5025 Franklin Rd, email georgejones@comcast.net

For Sale: New glass display case. 20.5" X 28.5" X 2.5". Never been used. \$25. Rock for sale - Outside rock except petrified wood and quartz \$.50/lb. Petrified wood and quartz-\$1/lb. Call Frances Mangrum to set up a time to visit. (615) 228-8577.

Swap and Shop is for Club members and friends of the Club to advertise goods and services for sale or swap. Want ads are also accepted.