



# Mid-TENN Gem'ers

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## The Prez Rambles On...

I hope everyone had a merry Christmas and hope the new year has gotten off to a great start for each of you. I hope you had time to spend with family and friends. For those who lost loved ones this past year I know the holiday season was difficult. I know the first Christmas without my Dad was rather sad and difficult emotionally. Even though this was the third Christmas without him, my family still shed a few tears. It seems the firsts (holidays, anniversaries, birthdays etc) after the loss of a loved one bring new challenges and feelings of loss. Fortunately these times also serve to keep the memories alive.

I can't tell you how thankful I am that I took several vacations with my parents long after I reached adulthood. As I once told my Dad after one of these trips, "I sure enjoyed spending my inheritance with you instead of after you are gone." My Dad and I spent a lot of time together and the memories remain vivid of the times we spent together. I wouldn't take anything for those memories.

Anyway my family and I had a wonderful time during the Christmas season. It's always great to enjoy family anytime. Christmas just seems to top the year off as we get a concentrated amount of family time on both sides of the family. I hope you and your family did the same. I know in talking to some of our members before Christmas, that they were eagerly anticipating children and grandchildren coming home.

You know it's kind of funny that everyone I talked to had their family schedule memorized, you could just see the gleam in their eyes. What children and grandchildren were coming and when they were scheduled to arrive, how long they would be staying, and invariably worrying about having to clean out the guest bedroom. Those that had several coming home, were also anticipating, with glee I might add, of where to put all the bodies to sleep. Now someone please tell me, how does Santa find his way in without anyone seeing him with all those people sleeping in the living room floor under the Christmas tree?

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 2004:

January 15th  
 February 19th  
 March 18th  
 April 15th  
 May 20th  
 June 17th  
 July 15th  
 August 19th  
 September 16th  
 October 21st  
 November 18th  
 December 16th

### Inside this issue:

Presidents Letter

Donelson/Tullahoma news

Field Trips - past and future

Fossils: What they are, Cleaning them, and much more...

Swap & Shop and more...

## Dues are 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.

### Send dues to:

Will H. Smith  
 5304 Bellcrest Dr  
 Antioch, TN 37013

Even though it's a memory now, we had a great show. Most of the dealers had a great show. Attendance was great especially on Saturday. Sunday wasn't half bad either, considering we were up against a Titans home game. We had lots and lots of members helping before, during, and after the show. I appreciate everyone's help. It was good to see some new faces helping out too.

In case you were wondering the President's Prize for show helpers was won by Barbara Ellis. It was hard to tell thru the smile on her face, I kind of think she liked winning the Paint Rock Slab. It was great to be able to present it in person as she was still at the show when I drew her name. Maybe I'll do the same next year. Even though it seems a long way off it will soon be time to start working on the 2004 show.

Mary Clyde Sparks has been heavily bribed, no, appointed to be our show chairman - ok it was bribery. I didn't get a definite yes, but since it will be in print I guess we'll have to call it official, right Mary Clyde? Many thanks to Will Smith for his duties as show chairman the past three years. Now before you get too excited about Mary Clyde being show chairman forever, it's not a lifetime job, the pay isn't good enough for that and I will run out of bribery materials long before that anyway. Any one want to step up and volunteer to be assistant show chairman otherwise known as trainee for show chairman and chief gopher for the show chairman? I'm going to get my eagle eye and show chairman radar out to detect someone or someones to help in this endeavor if no one volunteers. This isn't a threat people, IT'S A PROM-

ISE! I'm serious about getting someone new involved.

Enough rambling for now. See you at the meeting!

Steve  
shenegar@  
net-serv.com



## It Was Show Time

By Will Smith

I want to thank everyone who helped in the show this year. So many of the new members worked hard and it showed. Everyone I've talked with indicated they think this was the best show ever. Each year we hear the same which proves our extra work each year makes it a better show. Do not have the numbers, but it looks like we increased the attendance and income. We will need the extra money to pay for all the added classes at Donelson and Tullahoma.

I'm retiring, but look forward to doing the show same time same place next year. Mary Clyde will provide more information during the year. If you did not participate, make your plans early so you too can promote our schools, hobby, and our club.

## Donelson/Tullahoma News

As you know it was approved to allow MTGMS meetings to be held both in Nashville and Tullahoma. Ken Swan has advised the first organizational meeting will be the first Sunday of February at 2 PM in the large meeting room at the Senior Citizens Center. Donelson will hold it's organizational meeting on the

3rd Sunday of February at 2 PM in the auditorium at Donelson Senior Citizens Center.

Classes have started for the quarter and Tullahoma is full until the new room can be completed. Donelson is offering Lapidary Tuesday morning and night, Wednesday night, and Thursday morning; Faceting Thursday afternoon, Casting Thursday night, and Silversmithing Saturday morning. An additional Silversmithing class may be added around the first of February on Monday night. For more information check with Donelson SCC or Joe Powell.



*The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc*

*The Friendly Federation -  
Founded in 1976 to serve.*

*SFMS Field Trip Committee*

*DMC Program of the SFMS Field  
Trip Committee*

## An Official Field Trip of the Mobile Rock and Gem Society (Host)

**When:** 9:30 am Sat, Feb 28th

**Where:** Epes, Alabama, Sumter County

Children are allowed under adult supervision. Pets are allowed on leash.

**Fees:** There is no fee for collecting at this site.

**Collecting:** The finds are marcasite, pyrite nodules and fossils from the cretaceous period.

**Bring:** Buckets or bags, small hand shovel and scraper, newspaper for wrapping fossils. There is no restaurant nearby, so bring food, water and drinks. Wear layered clothing

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for our unpredictable Alabama weather.

**Where to Stay:** There are approximately 20 motels and four campgrounds in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, which is 52 miles northeast of Epes. Livingston, Alabama is approximately 8.7 miles west of Epes on U.S. Highway 11 and has two motels, Comfort Inn and Western Inn. Demopolis, Alabama is 30 miles south of Epes and has seven motels and two campgrounds.

**Meet:** 9:30 am, Central time, Saturday, February 28, 2004

**Directions:** Epes is on U.S. Highway 11 which runs parallel with Interstate 20 and 59. We will meet at or near the R & E Quick Stop County Store and Service Station on Highway 11 at the intersection of Highway 21, which is approximately 1/4 mile west of the Tombigbee River bridge.

**Contact numbers:**

Larry Landry, Field Trip Chairman  
(251) 653-8459

e-mail address:  
maryloulandry@aol.com

Mobile Rock and Gem Society

**The DMC Diamond Hill Mine, SC quartz dig**

*Hosted by the Athens Rock and Gem Club, Athens, GA*

On Saturday December 13th, nineteen braved the winter weather to dig for quartz at the Diamond Hill Mine near Antrville, SC. Actually, the weather turned out to be perfect for digging. Overcast and high 40's. The nasty rain promised in the forecast never showed up until everyone had left for the day.

Participants flocked from all parts of the southeast to participate in the digging frenzy. There were both familiar and unfamiliar faces from Georgia, Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Florida, and even a couple guys from Pennsylvania who were members of a western North Carolina club. Everyone went home with many treasures and smile on there face.

The "booty" was substantial. The skeletal quartz was top quality. Some of the best the mine has ever given up. Recent activity with heavy equipment had made the prized material readily accessible. Also, several participants did well in the "smoky quartz pit." Blocky crystals of light smoky color up to 1.5" long were found. By far, the big trophies of the day were unearthed by the "demon diggers" from PA. To the delight of all that attended, they had more large plates of skeletal quartz than they could carry off. The largest plate probably weighed almost two hundred pounds (trimmed) and took three people to carry. It was like Christmas.

Field Trip Chairman: Jim Maudsley

**HELP WANTED**

**SHORT HOURS:**

30 to 45 minutes

PAY: \$.00

**BENEFITS: Praise, admiration**

**TIME: 3rd Thursday of month**

**JOB: presentation, video,**

**talk, slides, demonstration**

**QUALIFICATION - willingness**

**to present**

**CONTACT: Bob King**

kingwhhs47@hotmail.com,

615-754-0095

**2004 SFMS Wildacres School Workshops:**

**Session 1: April 19-25, 2004**

Cabochons: Gerald Burnham  
Faceting and Intarsia: Tom Wilkie  
Glass Bead Making: Marilyn Jobe  
Goldsmithing: Dan Haga  
Precious Metal Clay (1 & 2): Ken & Mary Ann Devos  
Raku Pottery: Sarah House  
Seed Beading: Jo Harris  
Silversmithing (Beg): Allen Jewell  
Wirecraft (Beg): Lisa Roberts

**Session 2: August 23-29, 2004**

Beading & Design, traditional:  
Addy DePietro  
Chainmaking (Beg): Carol Boyle  
Faceting (Int): Ken Reed  
Gem Appreciation: Ben Smit  
Glass Bead Making: Marilyn Jobe  
Lost-Wax Casting (Beg): Fred Sias  
Metalsmithing (Adv): Jeff Sheer  
Opal cutting: Joe DePietro  
Precious Metal Clay (Beg): Ken & Mary Ann Devos  
Raku Pottery: Cindy McDowell  
Wirecraft Sculpture (Adv)- Lisa Roberts

**Session 3: September 13-19, 2004**

Casting: ?  
Faceting and Intarsia: Tom Wilke  
Gem Appreciation: Ben Smith  
Opal cutting: ?  
Precious Metal Clay: Ken & Mary Ann Devos  
Raku Pottery: ?  
Seed Beading: Jo Harrison  
Silversmithing (Adv): Dan Haga  
Silversmithing (Beg): Allen Jewell  
Wirecraft (Beg): Lisa Roberts

The date of the September workshop session was received just prior to press time. Some instructors unconfirmed.

**SFMS REGISTRAR:**

Kerri and Bill Wetzel  
5010 Sunset Dr, Easley, SC 29642  
Phone: 864-306-6749 Email:  
wwetzel@earthlink.net

## The Origins of Fossils

**What are Fossils:** They are evidence of life that lived in the geologic past. Very few animal or plant remains are preserved as fossils since most organic life is composed of soft parts which are seldom preserved.

The two main conditions that are almost essential for the preservation of organic remains are:

1. That the organism has hard parts such as Bones, Shells etc.
2. That the remains are covered quickly. If remains are not covered quickly scavengers will eat them, rivers or waves may destroy them or Oxygen will decompose them chemically. One of the best ways to preserve fossils is for a CONCRETION to surround them. Concretions are formed around organic remains after sediments are deposited and there is local cementation of those sediments.

**Fossils may be DIRECT or INDIRECT evidence of past life.**

**A. DIRECT** - Fossils which are of the DIRECT Evidence type are where the actual remains are involved in some manner.

**Unaltered Remains:** These are usually the unaltered hard parts such as shells, bones, wood, coral. They are never The actual remains of soft parts are rarely preserved since they normally decompose; however many animals as large as mammoths have been preserved in glacial ice. Insects enclosed in the amber are largely actual remains. Some remains of animals are found in tar deposits, such as La Brea deposits. The oldest actual remains of soft parts are rare dehydrated or mummified remains such as 150 million old dinosaur skin.

**Mineral Replacement:** Three groups of replacement fossils are recognized:

*Permineralization* - Mineral matter strengthening of the hard parts by filling in the pore space.

*Petrification* - The complete replacement of the original organic hard parts by mineral water. Usually the mineral matter is silica or Calcite, Dolomite or Pyrite.

*Distillation* - The removal of the volatile materials, mostly water, to preserve a record of the soft parts with the carbon remains. Carbon remains, along with impressions, are the chief record of organic soft parts and therefore they are very important.

**B. INDIRECT** - Fossils which are INDIRECT Evidence of prehistoric life are:

*Fossil Molds* - Three dimensional impressions of the inside or outside of organic remains.

*Casts* - Duplicates of the original remains by filling in the molds with mineral water. Only the outside is duplicated.

*Impressions* - Flat impressions formed where an organism lay in the mud.

*Coprolites* - Fecal droppings of organisms. Very important since they indicate food and the environment present.

*Footprints* - Special molds that indicate the animal that made them as well as the animals weight and mode of travel.

*Tracks and Trails* - Of worms and insects indicating presence. of the organism.

*Borings and Tunnels* - General forms of life can be identified as being present from these Casts. These are the earliest evidence of life on land.

*Chemical Remains* - Trace fossils that some form of organism was present.

**C. VERY INDIRECT!** - Presence of Organic Carbon Molecule, Organic acids. Coal is evidence for presence of plants. Petroleum is evidence for

the presence of plant or animal life. In addition to telling the details of life in the past and the story of such unique animals as the giant dinosaurs, fossils also tell of past climates.

Colonial corals in Greenland rocks attest to warmer conditions in the past than today, and imprints of fir and spruce in unconsolidated clays near the surface recorded the penetration of glacial cold far to the south Fossils are frequently used to determine the marine or fresh-water origin of rocks.

Note: Concretions are often found in shales, sandstones, and limestones. They may be spherical or flattened masses formed around a fossil or some other nucleus. They may be very small or up to several feet in diameter. Concretions are often harder than the enclosing rock and hence are found as they weather out of it.

*Information extracted from material presented to CLGMS by: Bob Cross, Professor of Geology, San Jacinto College - North*

### FALSE FOSSIL ODDITIES

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

### CLEANING LIMESTONE FOSSILS

Clean limestone fossils with a little Sani-flush in a pail of water. After the fizzing stops, drain and repeat as necessary. Rinse thoroughly when

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finished. As with any chemical, use caution and protect your eyes.

*Via The Mountain Gem, and Rocky Review 12/94*

## FOSSILS AND MEDICINE

*by Fred Labahn*

Now that you have collected fossils of many varieties and from many classes, I have some information of a historic nature for their practical use. In the end it could reduce your medical expenses and save you some money. How so?, you say. Well, I say, read on.

As I so often do in my spare time, I take a book or magazine from the shelf and glance through and perhaps recall something of interest. Recently I came across an article, "A fossil For What Ails You." What follows is a review of part of the folklore connected with customs and practices dating back to the Paleolithic tribes of Europe.

As recently as 200 years ago many people in the world, including scientists and doctors believed that among other things fossils had remarkable power to cure different ailments. Physicians and folk doctors didn't agree on why fossils cured people and animals, but they agreed fossils were good medicine. Would it surprise you to know oil of amber was listed in an important Pharmacopoeia (list of drugs, their use and amounts) as a bonafide medicine as late as 1948?

The use of fossils reached their peak just after the Middle Ages. Physicians and folk doctors collected and prepared their own medications. In the 13th century, Emperor Frederick II of Germany set down strict rules ordering a separation of roles for the physician and apothecary. These rules however, did not apply to the folk doctors. The apothecaries prepared the fossils for use by grinding them to a fine powder and then mix-

ing them with wine, water or other liquids for internal use. Honey, wax, oil or other things were used to make ointments or salves.

In 1700 a large deposit of mammoth bones were found near the Neckar River. The Duke of Wurtemberg ordered a scientific dig. The scientists of the day did so and in the process got into an argument whether they were elephants brought to Europe by Hannibal, bones from old Roman sacrifices or animals destroyed by the great flood recorded in the Bible. While this was going on, the pharmacists, who collected materials for their own use, calmly gathered all the teeth and powdered them for medicinal use.

No one seems to know why certain fossils were used for specific illnesses except that the shape of the fossil determined its use. An example, in Scotland, the oyster Gryphaea, commonly called the Devil's toenail, was used for arthritic joint pains.

Amber is the fossil sap of extinct pine trees. It has been used longer and for a greater variety of medicinal purposes. Powdered amber mixed with other medicines was given to pregnant women to prevent miscarriage. Powdered amber mixed the wine eased the pain of childbirth. A necklace of amber beads worn by small babies protected against secret poisons, witchcraft and sorcery.

Callistrus, a Greek of the 4th century BC believed that yellow amber if worn as a collar about the neck cured fevers and diseases of the mouth, throat and jaws. Powdered and mixed with honey and oil of roses, it was good for diseases of the ear; added to honey, it was an excellent salve used to improve dim eyesight. In the 16th century, a doctor found a way to make oil of amber and from then to the 19th century it was used by many doctors for gout, rheumatism,

whooping cough, bronchitis and other ailments.

Ammonites are the favorite fossil of many collectors all over the world. The Greeks of the 3rd century used ammonites as a cure for blindness and snakebites. The snakebite remedy came from The belief ammonites were snakes.

Sea urchins were also part of the pharmacists' stock. A Cretaceous sea urchin spine, found in Palestine, was used for almost 2,000 years. Pline, the Roman historian of the 1st century, said that whoever licked it would find his gallstones broken and voided in short order, but Galen, a 2nd century physician, said that they should be crushed in mortar and mixed with water to be effective.

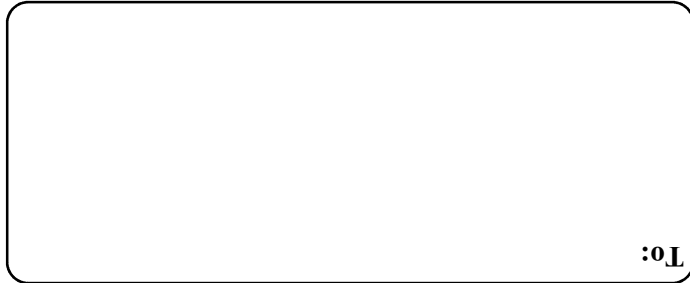
Belemnites were thought to be thunderbolts by people of the Middle Ages and still are in some parts of Great Britain. They were crushed and the powder kept a person from being struck by lightning or bewitched by demons from the sky. They were also used to cure a variety of illnesses and prevented nightmares.

Fossil shark teeth were thought to be tongues of serpents that St. Paul had turned to stone on his visit to the island of Malta. Because of this myth they were believed to have power against the bites of any reptiles. Wine in which shark teeth had been soaked was thought to be a good antidote for snake bite or any other poison.

Cures for ailments were also found in the use of jet, a very hard coal, dragon bones, unicorn horns (which were probably the horn of the male narwhale) and toadstones, which were the teeth of rays.

I have enjoyed reading of this use of fossils in early medical practice. For me, I will stay with modern medicine.

by Fred Labahn as reprinted in *Osage Hills Gems*

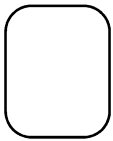


Forwarding and Address Correction Requested

To:

Next Meeting: Jan 15th  
Time: 6:30 pm  
Lewis Wilson  
"Elmwood"

First Class  
Postage



Middle Tennessee Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.  
c/o 2510 Essex Pl  
Nashville, Tennessee 37212

## 2004 SFMS William Holland School Workshops:

\*= prerequisite

### Session 1: June 13-19, 2004

Cabochons: Anita Westlake

Casting: John Iacullo

Chain making (beg): Dee Conybear

Faceting, beginning- Allen Jewell

Fused Glass- Addy DePietro

Opals -Joe DePietro

Seed Beading: Jo Harrison

Silversmithing (adv)\*: Dan Haga

Silversmithing (beg): Paul Casteel

Soapstone Carving: Dave Tuttle

Wirecraft Sculpture\*: Lisa Roberts

### Session 2: October 10-16, 2004

Chain making (int)\*: Carol Boyle

Faceting (Int)\*: Tom Boyle

Fused Glass: Addy DePietro

Glass Bead Making: Marilyn Jobe

Intarsia\*: Tom and Kay Benham

Lost-Wax Casting (beg): Fred Sias

Opal cutting: Joe DePietro

Seed Beading -Jo Harrison

Silversmithing (beg): Paul Casteel

Wirecraft (beg): Dawn Thornton

Wirecraft (adv) Sculpture\*: Lisa Roberts

### REGISTRAR:

Dana and Ray Gonzalez

6226 Seaton Drive,

Columbus, GA 31909

Phone: 706-327-4474

Email: drg@mchsi.com

All SFMS workshops are \$260 including meals and lodging!

**Save the planet and make a new MTG&MS friend: RIDE-SHARE! Email me (ingrid@dimp.com) or call 463-2163 if you are interested, and I'll coordinate ridesharing to the workshops for club members.**

## Swap and Shop

**For Sale:** Now available for sale! Large garage stuffed full of 35 yrs of rock collecting. Rocks of all types from fossils, specimens, to slabs are priced individually. Large selection of yard rocks still available priced by the pound. Petrified wood and quartz \$1/lb, other rocks \$.50/lb. Call Francis Mangrum to setup a time to visit (615) 228-8577.

**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:** Bargains Galore! Equipment & supplies at close-out prices. Come or call George Jones, 5025 Franklin Rd., Nashville, TN (615) 333-3781 email: georgejones@comcast.net

**Swap and Shop is for members and friends to advertise goods and services for sale or swap & want ads.**