



Mid-TENN Gem'ers

Newsletter of
The Middle Tennessee Gem
and Mineral Society, Inc.
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The Prez Rambles On...

Just a little over under 2 months until show time. I went to the show in Knoxville this weekend, so I'm really excited about our show. I got to visit several of our dealers (4 to be exact) and they are all looking forward to our show too. I can't wait. We've got a show meeting on the 24th at the Donelson Senior Meeting if anyone would like to join us. It will be immediately following the Nashville meeting - around 4-ish.

I hope lots of our members get the uncontrollable urge to help with the show this year. We had a great member turnout last year, which made it much easier on those that have been doing it for so long. We need your help both Friday afternoon December 10 and all day Saturday and Sunday, December 11-12. Don't forget we have to pack up after the show, so make sure a few of you stick around after 5 on Sunday to get the display cases put up and assist the dealers with getting out. And don't forget to spread the word to your friends and neighbors. The show is a great place for Christmas shopping.

While I'm thinking about it, we are scheduled to host the Dixie Mineral Council field trip next September. A group of volunteers is needed to find a location within an hour or two of Murfreesboro that approximately 50 to 100 rock hounds can easily get too. This same group will need to host the rock hunt and take care of any details such as fees for landowners, parking location, and some basic instruction for hunting at the site and getting the field trip information and directions to the Dixie Mineral Council 2 or 3 months in advance of the trip so other member clubs can publish the information for their members. The planning for this needs to start fairly soon. Won't you volunteer?

I understand our workshops in Tullahoma and Donelson are going full steam. I encourage you to take advantage of some of these classes if you would like to learn how to be a lapidary. If you have the time and can teach others, how about volunteering a morning or an evening to teach a class or help with an existing class. Our instructors do a great job. They do deserve a break every now and then. They'll appreciate your help even if

~ cont'd on page 2

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:

October 21st

November 18th

December 16th

Meeting Dates 2005:

January 15th

February 19th

March 18th

April 15th

Inside this issue:

Presidents Letter

Trip to Ray Mine
in NC

Wildacres Lapi-
dary School

Quake in Alaska
Changed Yellow-
stone Geysers

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

you aren't ready to teach your own class. Another thing we could use is slabs for the lapidary classes. If you could donate a few, maybe even buy a few at the show to donate, it would be greatly appreciated.

Enough of the rambling. See you at the meeting.

Steve
shenegar@
net-serv.com



*The Southeast Federation of
Mineralogical Societies, Inc
The Friendly Federation
Founded in 1976 to serve.*

DMC Program of the SFMS Field
Trip Committee

An Official Field Trip of the
Knoxville Gem and Mineral Club
(Host)

An Official Field Trip of the Mid-
dle Tennessee Gem and Mineral
Society

Saturday, November 20, 11:00 am
Norris Lake, Claiborne County,
Tennessee

Location: Willard Borland Recre-
ational Access area in Claiborne
Co, TN

To Collect: Ordovician Fossils:
Brachiopods, bryozoa, Gastropods,
Stromatolites (fossilized blue green
algae).

Directions: Going east towards
Knoxville, Tennessee on I-40, take
to I-640 east to Why 441/33 north
(exit 6) and travel towards May-
nardville, TN. Go through May-
nardville and cross the Veterans

Memorial Bridge. At the Clayborn
County Line look for the Willard
Borland Recreational Access Area
on the right, approximately 0.4
miles north of the bridge. Meet in
the parking lot near the boat launch
at 11:00 am.

Tools: Geology Hammer, bucket,
and material to wrap your speci-
mens.

We will be collecting along the
shore of Norris Lake. The area is
an easy walk from the parking area
and normally is not muddy.

Daniel Miller

Knoxville GMS, President and
Field Trip Chair

DMILLERSPE@aol.com

Field trips are open to all members
of associated clubs of the DMC
program of the SFMS Field Trip
Committee and to all members of
SFMS member clubs who have pro-
vided their membership with SFMS
liability insurance. Because of in-
surance requirements, members of
the GENERAL PUBLIC are NOT
invited on this or any DMC pro-
gram field trips!

DMC Program / SFMS Field Trip
committee's purpose:

To collect field trip information
from it's member societies; sched-
ule and coordinate field trip dates;
disseminate field trip information to
all member clubs so that each mem-
ber society may publish this infor-
mation as one of their "official"
scheduled field trips.

Please reply by e-mail to:
dmc@gamineral.org

World Wide Web site for the
DMC is:

<http://www.gamineral.org/dmc.htm>

Helpful Hints

To clean and shine most drusy
specimens, use Easy Off oven
cleaner (fume free is OK.) Spray
the specimen and then leave it over-
night in a closed container or bag
before rinsing. This even works for
iron stained quartz crystals. (Via
Golden Spike News)

For general cleanup, put a cake
of soap in a nylon stocking and use
in the wash-up areas in your shop.
Nylon is abrasive and removes
stubborn dirt. (Via Quarry Quips)

Never use ammonia, soap, or
detergents on genuine turquoise. In
fact a good test for the genuine is to
apply a spot of ammonia to the back
of a suspected piece. If it is genuine,
it will turn white. (Via Mountain
Gem. Via Quarry Quips)

Knowing that a new 2nd VP/
Newsletter Editor will be taking
over in the new year, I thought it
would be useful to get you guys
motivated to write articles. So, here
is an article I found that will hope-
fully do just that. Who knows,
maybe YOU will be the next editor!

Your current editor, Ingrid

Support Your Local Editor!

by Joy Bourne, President EFMLS
from the April 2001 Newsletter

One of the nicest perks of my
job as President of EFMLS has
been the receipt of Club bulletins
from many of you. I have learned a
great deal about who you are, what
you are doing, and it has been as
much fun as if I had been with you
to share your meetings, your club
shows and your field trips. Thank
you for including me in these activ-
ities by way of your newsletters.

In fact, it was through reading these newsletters, that I have become acquainted with people, whom I have never met, who have talents, abilities and willingness to fill some EFMLS offices and committee chairs. Our Federation is so wide-spread, that most personal contacts and acquaintances are limited to convention attendance. While e-mail has increased the opportunities for individual interaction, the bulletin reports of meetings and activities remain the primary source of inter-club contact. I am convinced that the most important person in your club is the person who puts your club on display - the Club Newsletter Editor. He or she is the artist who paints the picture of your organization; the one who presents you and your programs to the world. I have been privileged, over the past several years to read newsletters from all over the country in my capacity as AFMS Bulletins judge, and I can say, without reservation, that our EFMLS editors rank right up there with the best!

The EFMLS motto, "Communication is the Key to Our Success," is the bottom line on our official stationery - and it is the absolute bottom line for the editors' job descriptions. The editor's job is to communicate; to pass on the latest information about meetings, club projects, programs, shows, member concerns, and Federation news. It is he or she who promotes the club and builds membership by presenting an interesting and inviting picture of the club to the community at large. But, too often, it is assumed that he or she will also write all the articles. Here is where that member P.A.R.T.I.C.I.P.A.-

T.I.O.N. we spoke of last month, comes into play.

Yes, the club president writes a message, and that is important. The club secretary writes the minutes - and most secretaries do a great job of telling what has transpired at meetings, - but who writes the articles which review the most recent programs; which describe the upcoming program? Who writes the reminders to members about safety concerns associated with our hobby; Who tells the stories of field trip experiences; Who lists the tips and tricks which save time and material for the lapidarist; the details of fossil preservation; Who provides the information about mineral compositions and properties; Who reports on the current status of pending legislation which vitally affects our hobby activities, . . . etc., etc? These are the privileges and responsibilities of the members of the organization.

I use the term, "privileges", by design. In doing a little reading and research to flesh out an idea, the writer invariably discovers that he/she has learned something he or she didn't recall (or perhaps, never knew in the first place). This is now a learning experience to the writer's benefit! So, why not share that insight and knowledge with your fellow club members? You may have an idea for a better polishing method; a technique which worked (or didn't work) on a lapidary project; a collecting locality you have found (either successful or unsuccessful). Why not pass the information on to your friends - via the newsletter.

Unfortunately, it often seems that editors are taken for granted; that they are seen as grouchy, pesty people who are always hounding members to write articles - when there are many more interesting things to do, or when there is not enough time to meet a publishing deadline. So when you, the member, don't come through with the needed item, it is the editor who must fill the space. The editor has all he/she can do to manage the layout and printing of the newsletter each month, without also having to be the one who hounds people to write articles! As a result, the editor may resort to copying, verbatim, from other club newsletters or from the Federation newsletters, to fill the pages so you can have your eight- or ten-page issue each month. While these items are important to a well-rounded newsletter, they should not be the entire content! This is YOUR CLUB. The content of the newsletter should reflect YOUR CLUB! Need we say more?

Although I may be preaching to the choir, here, my intent is to let you - the editors know how important you really are - and how much your good work is appreciated. It is my hope that your club realizes all that you do for them, and perhaps this will serve as a wake-up call to members that their input is desired and necessary to keep the clubs alive, and most importantly - learning and growing!

Safety First

by Bill Klose, EFMLS Safety Chairman

Hearing loss affects about 28 million people in the U. S., about 10 million of these people received this damage, in part, as a result of expo-


Internet Web Page: <http://www.mtgms.org>

sure to loud noises. More than 20 million Americans are exposed to hazardous levels of noise on a regular basis that could result in noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL). Occupational noise exposure is the most common cause of NIHL, but non occupational exposure, such as live or recorded high volume music, airplanes, automobiles and recreational vehicles, household tools and some appliances, are also major contributors to NIHL. Very loud sounds of short duration, such as an explosion, gunfire, or loud banging, can produce immediate, severe, and permanent loss of hearing. Longer exposure to less intense levels of sound over time, exacts a gradual toll on hearing, initially without the person's awareness. The louder the level of noise, and the longer the duration of exposure, the greater the potential for damage. How can we protect ourselves from this hazard? The best method is to eliminate or reduce the level of intensity of the noise source and the time of exposure. The next best prevention method is to wear hearing protection in the form of ear plugs (disposable or fitted) or ear muffs when exposed to noise. Rock hounds are most commonly exposed to noise while in automobiles or recreational vehicles on the way to collecting sites.

Some collecting sites contain industrial equipment and vehicles that can generate considerable amounts of noise. When at these sites it is best to wear the same level of protection that the workers at the site are wearing, as the employer has determined the level of protection required for his employees. Rock hounds also use hammers and even large portable gasoline engine powered diamond saws at collecting

sites to recover specimens, and should protect their hearing with ear plugs and or ear muffs. Back in the shop, all rotating equipment, such as diamond saws, grinding wheels, rock hammers, hydraulic rock trimmers, etc., contribute to the noise level. Consider wearing ear plugs or muffs to prevent NIHL.

Grow a Crystal Garden

from Inga Wells, Juniors Co-chair

A modern variation on the traditional Coal Garden. First the well-known instruction for the traditional Coal Garden:

- 4 T of water
- 4 T of non-iodized salt
- 4 T of household bluing
- 4 T of household ammonia

Mix and stir slowly until the salt is dissolved. Place broken charcoal squares in a glass bowl or other container. Slowly pan or spoon the mixture over the coal pieces. Watch the salt crystals grow.

Housewives used to add bluing to their laundry. They liked the blue cast it gave their linens. I have tried to find said bluing in the super markets around this city and could not find it for the last few years. We have tried liquid Rit dye, or the powder dye, food coloring, Easter egg coloring agents, or tempura colors. All of them will work fine to add a bit of color to the crystals. The dye is not needed to grow the crystals. I asked myself the question, why add ammonia? It smells bad and can irritate your nose, throat, and eyes. If you use it, keep it away from your face and close the bottle immediately. The ammonia is used as an agent to speed up the evaporation of the solution. Ammonia is a

gas. The household ammonia has the gas dissolved in water. It can be left out of the mix or reduced to 1 or 2 tablespoons. Keep the ratio of salt to liquid at 1 tablespoon of salt to 1 ounce of liquid or 15 ml salt to 30 ml water.

One more important item to keep in mind. Never mix any product containing ammonia with a product containing bleach. This would give off poisonous gas and should never be done.

The Crystal Garden.

You need a container. Some suggestions: a pretty glass bowl, any disposable container, plastic or foil will do. A cardboard box lined with foil to make it water-proof makes a nice display case. You can cut a window in one or more sides of box.

Next gather material on which you would like the crystals to grow. Porous materials works best. Broken pieces of charcoal, pieces of sponge, brick, broken clay pot pieces, lava rocks, pumice stones, bark, wooden beads, florist sponges, shells, sand stones, the list is endless. Arrange the material in your container. Create your garden! Mix colors, shapes and textures to suit your taste.

Make a saturated salt solution. Spoon slowly over the objects. You can leave a little solution in the bottom of the container. The solution will flow into the porous material and new crystals will grow on the old crystals.

Be creative, sprinkle some salt on the garden, add a little bit of a different color. After all the water is evaporated, add some more material and sparingly spoon on some

saturated alum or epsom salt solution.

If you have lots of saturated solution left and want to try something else: You can make suncatchers or tree decoration to add to the

Giant crystal cave discovered

By BBC News Online's Jonathan



So clear, you can read text through the crystals

Amos

A gigantic cave of crystals has been discovered in an old silver mine in Spain.

The geode, which is eight metres (26ft) long and crammed full of gypsum prisms, has been put under police guard to prevent souvenir hunters from raiding the extraordinary natural phenomenon.

"The next possibility is to drill a hole to fix a window in the geode to show the tourists." - Javier Garcia-Guinea

The geologist who announced the find, Javier Garcia-Guinea, wants to turn the site into a tourist attraction.

He told BBC News Online that up to 10 people could sit inside the geode - an object normally small enough to hold in your hands.

"Bending your body between the huge crystals is an incredible sensation," he said. "When I was young I dreamt of flying, but never to go into a geode internally covered with transparent crystals."

Rumours of the existence of a giant gypsum geode had been circulating among mineral collectors since December.

But it was only on 28 May that Javier Garcia-Guinea, from the Spanish Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) in Madrid, finally managed to track down the cave.

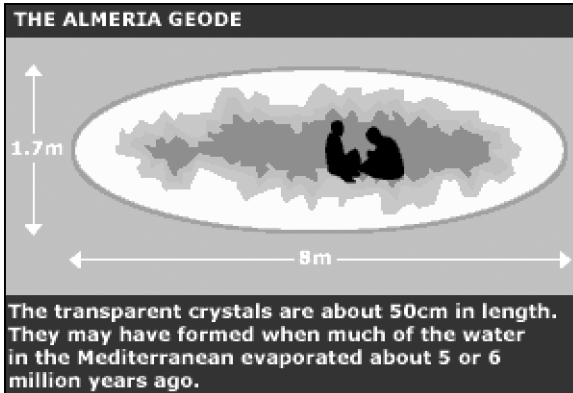
"The crystals are absolutely transparent and perfect," he said. The geologist has searched the

international literature and can find no other object to compare in size.

The geode - essentially a rock cavity which has become lined with crystalline deposits - is eight meters in length, 1.8 metres wide and 1.7 metres high (26 feet by six by six).

The crystals of gypsum - hydrous calcium sulphate - are about half a metre in length.

The giant geode may have formed at the same time as a geological event called the Messinian salinity crisis.



At this time, about six million years ago, the Mediterranean Sea evaporated, depositing thick layers of salts. The same, salt-saturated fluids could have filled up the Spanish geode, which lies near the coast.

Map BBC

The drying out of the Mediterranean was probably caused by a restriction in the straits of Gibraltar, the sea's only connection with rest of the Earth's oceans.

Javier Garcia-Guinea has blocked the entrance to the geode with five tonnes of rock and called in the police to guard the location. After a period of scientific study, he hopes the cave can be turned into a major local tourist attraction.

"The next possibility is to drill a hole to fix a window in the geode to show the tourists. Almeria is little town with nice beaches just four kilometres from the mine and is

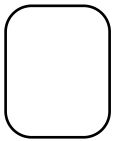
Javier Garcia-Guinea is concerned about theft



To: _____

Forwarding and Address Correction Requested

First Class
Postage



well known to English holidaymakers."



The crystals are made from hydrous calcium sulphate

All photos courtesy of Javier Garcia-Guinea

Please remember to write articles for YOUR newsletter today, so you can be ready to help the new editor in the coming year! Plus, I'll stop pestering you!

Next Murr Meeting:
Oct 21st
7:30 pm
Dr Leimer
Next Don Meeting:
Oct 24th, 3 pm
Next Tull Meeting:
Nov 8th, 7 pm



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

Swap and Shop

For Sale: Now available for sale! Large garage stuffed full of 35 yrs of rock collecting. 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.