



Mid-TENN Gem'ers

Newsletter of
The Middle Tennessee Gem
and Mineral Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 1256
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Presidential Ramblings

Spring is here and summer is just around the corner. It is time to go and find new discoveries. It is always a very busy time for us in the education area. Speaking of Education Areas, the geo-dig2 on May 6th at West Elementary School was a great success! It couldn't have been done without the financial support and volunteers from MTGMS. Since Tina moved from fourth grade to fifth grade, we had to come up with all new activities for this year's geo dig.

One of the main areas involved rocks and minerals, which included teaching by MTGMS members Bill Buckner, Steve Henegar and Lewis Elrod. Cameron Byler's display on minerals from the Elmwood Mine added to this day! Thanks to Cameron for setting this display up in the library at West Elementary for the whole school to enjoy this year. It was one of the focal points of the mineral lesson. The students had a coloring book on ABC minerals, which included all the rocks in Cameron's display, as well as minerals that Bill, Steve, and Lewis brought to share. If anyone is interested in purchasing this booklet for students, the books cost less than a dollar per book. The booklets can be purchased by contacting Diamond Dan Publications at (585) 289-4936. (email: diamonddan@rochester.rr.com)

A special thanks to the rock club members for bringing the little extras that always mean so much. The students were so excited to get the mineral and rock specimens and necklaces. Also, thank you to Johnny... for your great idea on the necklace in the small miniature container. We filled it with garnets, emeralds, and quartz chips. Marty Hart documented the day by being on hand to once again take photos of the dig. Thanks Marty!

Tom Kurras led an activity on selenites and pegmatites. The students received an hourglass selenite from the Great Salt Plains in Oklahoma that we dug last summer, as well as a beautiful rounded selenite from Tom, which made a great comparison that shows the various forms that selenite can take. He also taught the students about breccias and conglomerates by using "edible rocks" made by the fifth grade parents.

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 2005:

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

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

President Letter

Upcoming Meetings Information

Field trip

Member Article: How Rocks and Minerals Have Shaped Our Belief Systems

by Stephanie Stump
and more...

This year, we brought in a flume for the sluice area where students washed minerals from a bag of sand. Ricky Driver brought this in from the Lebanon Flea Market. For more information on this, you can call Ricky at (615) 666-3527 (H) or cell phone (615) 633-2677. Theresa Wright's geology students from Mt. Juliet High School came to teach "The Rock Cycle" with a dichotomous key. By using rock specimens, along with this key, the fifth grade students were able to determine if the rocks were igneous, sedimentary, or metamorphic.

The fifth grade students also went to an "Ice Laboratory" inside a classroom-sized plastic bubble inflated by a fan to do five ice investigations, including one investigation with "ice balloons". The last area was a "CSI Sundance" investigation that Tina and I developed to help the students learn how to read the past paleo-environment through the use of fossil exhibits. Three physics students from White House High School came to help with this hands-on activity. The students gained by this interaction with high school science students. Congressman Jim Cooper attended our geological dig again this year. It means a lot to have his support, understanding, and appreciation for hands-on learning. It's important for students to learn science, but it is essential for students to "do science" in order to gain an understanding of the science so that students can apply and think through what they are learning.

Other good news: The MTGMS ID cards are now available. Be sure to get yours. The field trip to the Murfreesboro Museum will be soon. Updates on this will be at the May meeting. We look forward to

seeing you at the next meeting on Thursday, May 19. Please remember to gather "goodies" for the next meeting to be shown, traded, or sold. This "rock swap" is always a great way to meet members and to share what we love. See you there.

Bob King,
President

A Note from Tina: Once again, I'd like to thank the Middle Tennessee Gem and Mineral Society for their constant support to bring this geological dig to our fifth grade students at West Elementary. Your support comes long before the day of the dig. I gain so much each time I attend a meeting or share a day with the rock club members. You add to my teaching and in doing so you reach out to my students by sharing what you know. We appreciate and gain so much from your educational outreach. When the students look back over their school years, I think they will remember the geo-dig, but most of all, I think that they will carry a little geology and a little more love for science with them. My goal is to help the students see that science is not just a subject that they learn in school, but it is a part of our every day lives. Thank you for making such a difference in our learning!

Upcoming Meetings

by John Martin

Murfreesboro meeting: May 19th - Show, Swap & Shop - After a general meeting we will have our annual Show, Swap & Shop - ALL members are encouraged to bring a Show & Tell item. Something that you would like to show to the other members of the club. This is a

chance to "brag" a little about your collection. Also this is a good chance to ask "What is this?" to our more knowledgeable members. Members are also encouraged to bring items that they would like to swap or sell to other club members. This is a great chance to trade or sell some of those "extra" slabs, rocks, specimens, tools or findings that you have.

Donelson meeting: The next meeting will be Sunday, May 22nd at 3:00 PM. The speaker is Mimi Walsh and the topic is Enameling (which is the fusion of special powdered glass to metals). She has been doing this for over 50 years. This will be a great chance to see the basics of how this is done and may be the next expansion of your own artistic talents.

IT's FINALLY HERE!!!! The MTSU Mineral, Gem and Fossil Museum Field Trip will be held on Saturday, May 21st from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm. Please meet us at 1:00 in the Farm Bureau parking lot and we will leave from there, and go as a group to the Museum. If you are unable to meet us at the Farm Bureau, you can call Lewis Elrod (615) 893-8270 for directions.

Want to go looking for Amethyst crystal in GA??? We would like to organize a trip to GA to go collect amethyst. The dig site is located in Jackson's Crossroads (JXR) Wilkes County, GA (near Washington, GA and about 350 miles from Nashville) and a tentative date for the dig is Saturday, June 4th. Go to <http://www.dixieuhedrals.net/> to see examples of what is being dug up and get a little information on the trip. The charge is \$25 per person. We will have to contact the owner, make

sure he approves of the date and pay in advance. Please contact me, John Martin at (615) 210-5385 if you are interested. I will put together a list and try to get the date approved. IF you want to go but June 4th, is not a good date, let me know that also, we may be able to work out a better date or a second trip.

I am always looking for speakers and topic suggestions for both the Murfreesboro and Donelson meetings. If you have a topic you would like to speak on, know someone whom I should call and get to come to our meetings to speak, or would just like to make a suggestion about a topic you want to hear, please feel free to call me on my cell phone (615) 210-5385 or email me at MBDjewelry@aol.com. Please put MTGMS in the subject or I might accidentally delete it without reading it :-). Thanks...

John

Tullahoma Meeting - April 2005

Joseph Maierbacker opened the April meeting of the MTG&MS of Tullahoma which met at 7:00pm Monday, April 15, 2005 at the Trinity Luthern Church in Tullahoma.

Last month we were glad to have Ken Swann attend the meeting after his surgery. They mentioned that last year the MTG&MS gave Motlow \$2000.00 for geology school

scholarship and this year they gave \$500.00. The field trip to Fairfield was a success. Everyone found some Horse Mountain agates, and had a good time on a lovely day.

In March we made \$7.00 for our stamp fund and in April we made

\$10.00. Thanks everyone, and thanks for the donations of stones for the drawings.

Ken started the Silversmithing classes. Only three at a time. Date for another class will be announced later.

Remember, hours for shop:

Monday 9-11

Tuesday 9-3

Thursday 9-3

Ken announced the name tags will be available with payment of dues.

In June our speaker will be Kieth Tobson.

Peggy showed a cabachon ring with a sodalite setting which she made in Ken's silversmith class. Dick Besancenez showed a cabachon he is working on. It shows an interesting mix of shiny and dull lines in the same stone. Angela Arnold showed a necklace from her daughter, Paula. Last month she had geodes and stones from Bisby, Arizona. And Joseph showed a "chest" and a jar from wood with a pretty inlay stone.

Joseph had a book on stones from Germany and a bulletin on "Flintknapping" from Old Stone Fort Archaeological Park in Manchester.

Be sure to attend the Dogwood Festival in Winchester on April 15th, 16th, and 17th.

Ken had the "man on the mountain" but he forgot.

Ken went hunting for turkey but didn't see any. A 7 year boy from Tullahoma shot a 24 lb. turkey.

Heloise and Norman Kendrick brought Bill Jackson from Murfreesboro to tell us about his wood shop and how he got inter-

ested in wirewrapping and jewelry making. He showed some of the beautiful pieces of jewelry he has made.

Next meeting May 9th at the same time, same place.

*Respectfully,
Patty Gadeken*

How Rocks and Minerals Have Shaped Our Belief Systems

by Stephanie Stump

I have recently become curious about how rocks and minerals have shaped civilizations. It occurred to me that although humans have developed the ability to shape rocks into jewelry quality stones many years ago, rocks and minerals have also molded our lives in a varied amount of ways. From our religious beliefs to our many superstitions, rocks and minerals have certainly played a key, if subtle, role in the formation of human societies all over the world.

The Egyptians were definitely no exception to this. Indications that the pyramids were constructed for their gods are contained in the very stones that they are comprised of. These giant blocks of limestone were the homes of many fossilized organisms. It was common for the fossils to fall out of the blocks during construction and the workers developed the myth that the gods would come from heaven during the night and eat these "lentils". Lentils, in turn, were a pea like plant commonly eaten by the Egyptians. The Egyptians also believed that garnet, which has been prevalently found in ancient burial sights, was a protector of the dead in their

journey of the after life. Rocks and minerals have also served a less mystical role in the Egyptian culture. For instance, powdered malachite and lazurite was commonly used as eye shadow and copper was used in the formation of crowns and headdresses for their elite citizens.

The Romans and the Greeks were also guilty of letting rocks and minerals shape their societies. Diamonds were highly regarded among the Romans because of their hardness. One Roman philosopher, Theophrastus, went so far as to indicate that dark colored diamonds were male and light colored diamonds were female. Perhaps this can be correlated with today's perception of diamond color, meaning the clearer/ light colored diamond a man bestows to his desired woman, the more highly he regards her femininity. The Romans (another correlation) were perhaps the first civilization to develop the gold ring as a symbol of engagement. Gold was also an indication of status, for only the wealthiest of citizens could adorn their homes and bodies with gold embellishments. There is also the myth of King Midas and his golden touch shared by the Romans and the Greeks. King Midas was granted his wish by Dionysus of having everything he touch turn to gold. But, King Midas quickly discovered his bad judgment and requested to be released of his enchantment. To release the curse, Dionysus ordered the King to wash in the Pactolus River, which is the mythological source of the gold present in the river today.

We Americans have also been susceptible to letting rocks and minerals define the contours of our realities and folklores. Let's not forget the Gold Rush that led set-

tlers to the western United States in a panicked frenzy. People uprooted their families and risked their lives for the possibility of finding gold in the mountains and streams of California. This historical event led to one mythological story developed by Welsh immigrants who worked in the gold mines. They believed that gnomes, who lived within the mines, would knock on the walls before a collapse. These tiny life savers were known as Tommyknockers. A more logical explanation would be that the "knocking" was actually the rock inside the mine shaft cracking before it fell in on itself. Then there is the common Hawaiian tale that the goddess Pele formed the islands with her frequent temper tantrums, but I have heard of another superstition in which the hardened lava rocks is Pele's hair. It is said that if a person leaves the islands with a chunk of Pele's hair as a souvenir then they will be cursed with bad luck for the rest of their lives.

I hope that I have left you with some interesting thoughts about the importance of rocks and minerals to ponder. Most rock collectors accumulate specimens because they like the color or structure of the piece itself or they prize a rock's rarity, but I think that the historical significance of rocks and minerals can be just as satisfying and interesting.

**DMC Program of the SFMS
Field Trip Committee**

*An Official Field Trip of The
Tennessee Valley Rocks and
Mineral Club (HOST)*

**An Official Field Trip of
the Middle Tennessee Gem and
Mineral Society**

**10:00 AM, Saturday,
June 18th, 2005
CHUNKY GAL MOUNTAIN
ClayCounty, NC
(FREE Dig)**

COLLECTING: We will be collecting Zoisite with Ruby, two different kinds of Sapphires, There have been very good examples of sapphire found during these trips. Also, some rubies have been found here. I may also take people to a close by site for crystal clear garnets that make beautiful gem trees.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: There are no facilities, this is a wilderness area and not suited for small children. Also, everyone must attend a safety briefing before going on their own. This is a requirement because of the terrain we will be collecting at. Please extend our warmest invitation to all to join us for a beautiful day in the N. C. Mtns.

BRING: People should bring a garden shovel or hand rake, a sifting screen, buckets. The best finds come from digging around the tree roots. (As always, bring your picnic lunch, plenty of fluids, some bug spray, sunscreen, a hat, gloves, and sturdy shoes. You may also need to bring a pick, large hammer, and chisels if you want to work on the boulders. - DMC)

**DIRECTIONS AND WHERE
TO MEET:**

Where we will meet: We will meet at the Huddle House restaurant in Hayesville N.C. at 10 a.m. I will be there about 8:30 a.m. for breakfast and will be wearing our club vest so people can find me. The Chunky Gal site is a 20 minute drive from Hayesville toward Franklin N.C.

When: 10 am, Saturday, June 18, 2005

Directions to our meeting place:

The Huddle House is located on the south side of US 64, just west of the intersection of US 64 and SR 69 and adjacent to the Ingles shopping center. (Remember - everyone must meet and proceed to the collecting site together! - DMC)

Contact: Jack Weaver

Field Trip Chairman, Tennessee Valley Rocks and Mineral Club (Chattanooga, TN)

Email: Madjack711@aol.com

DMC Field Trip Policies:

(DMC Field Trip Sharing Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee)

1. All societies which have agreed to host a field trip and join the DMC Field Trip Sharing Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee will be called an "associated" club.

2. Only associated clubs will be allowed to publish DMC program field trips as their official monthly field trip. (Benefit of membership!)

3. 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 provided their membership with SFMS liability insurance.

4. For insurance purposes, all associated clubs must publish all DMC program field trips as "officially recognized" field trips of their society. It is required that all persons who attend a DMC program field trip be a member, in good standing, of an SFMS club. Since a family membership covers everyone in a family who can attend, your SFMS

club will need all family member names on their membership roll.

5. All sites visited by the DMC field trip sharing program are not to be revisited unless they are on public domain property - road cuts, national forests, etc., or on privately owned land with the owner's permission. This is the quickest way to lose access to a host club's field trip location. Therefore, if an associated club or one of its members breaks this crucial DMC field trip policy, their future DMC program field trip information will be forfeited!

6. Please do not visit a site immediately before a DMC program field trip. Also, do not go to a site ahead of the group on the day of the field trip. Meet and convoy with the rest of the group so that everyone will have equal access to the site.

7. Do not park your vehicle where it is blocking the road, a gate, or another vehicle.

8. Always fill in all your holes.

9. Don't litter.

10. Never disturb buildings or other facilities at a collecting site.

11. Only take home what you can reasonably use!

12. PLEASE keep your vehicle locked at all times!

"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 provided their membership with SFMS liability insurance. Because of insurance requirements, members of the GENERAL PUBLIC are NOT invited on this or any DMC program field trips!"

Website for the DMC is:
www.gamineral.org/dmc.htm

LaVelle Smith scholarship

My name is Teresa Gilreath and I am a senior geology major at Tennessee Technological University. I was born in 1969 in Sparta, Tennessee and graduated from White County High School in 1987. I started college in 1999 and have matured greatly from the experience with other students and cultures.

Dear Mr. King and MTG&MS Members:

I am writing to thank you for the Lavelle Smith Scholarship, which I have been awarded. This scholarship will help further my studies in geology at Tennessee Technological University. Being a fulltime and nontraditional student is financially demanding and the Lavelle Smith Scholarship will help alleviate the burden. I take great pride in this scholarship and pledge to be worthy of it.

*Sincerely,
Teresa Lynn Gilreath*

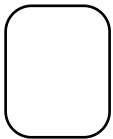
Dave Shepard scholarship

Jennifer Lynn Markham' Biography: I was born in Bowlinggreen, KY on April 20, 1984, when shortly after, my parents and I moved to Greenbrier, TN where I have lived ever since. I have no brothers or sisters so for entertainment I spent all of my time outside exploring and collecting animals and rocks of any kind or playing softball and basketball. I attended Davidson Academy in Nashville from K4 through 12th grade. There, I was able to take a biology track, which set me up to enter Tennessee Tech University as a Wildlife/Fisheries major. After

To: _____

Forwarding and Address Correction Requested

First Class
Postage



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





Next Murr Meeting:
May 19th
7:30 pm

Show, Swap
& Shop

Next Don Meeting:
May 22nd, 3 pm

Next Tull Meeting:
June 13th, 7 pm

taking my second geology class, Geology and the Environment, I realized that this is what I really wanted to do. I plan to attend graduate school, but for now I have too many interest to decide what I will study. Beyond academics, I play softball for the Tennessee Tech's varsity softball team, which does not leave me much spare time. But when I do have time, my dog Cole and I go out hiking to find new trails.

Dear Mr. King and Middle Tennessee Gem and Mineral Society members,

I, Jennifer Lynn Markham, would like to thank Mr. King and the Middle Tennessee Gem and Mineral Society members for awarding me the Dave Shepard Scholarship for the 2005-2006 academic year. I am very excited to have been considered for and receive this honor. I love geology and I cannot imagine studying anything else. This scholarship will help me to further my education here at Tennessee Tech University, but most of all it has encouraged me to achieve my goal as a successful geology major. Thank you for granting me this generous gift and responsibly.

*Thank you,
Jennifer Markham*

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. 1 case is 21x21x4; 1 case is 19x21x4 1/2, each is \$25.00. Call Francis Mangrum to setup a time to visit: 228-8577.

For Sale: Rough Rock \$.50/lb. Your pick, by appointment only - June Miller 931-598-9740.

For Sale: Sandblaster-new \$50.00 Large selection of polishing compound. Call George Jones (615) 333-3781 5025 Franklin Rd Nashville, TN 37220 georgejones@comcast.net

Swap and Shop is for members and friends to advertise goods and services for sale or swap & want ads. All ads must be submitted to the editor each month that you want an ad to run!