

August 2011

PICKIN'S AND DIGGIN'S

WILLIAMSON COUNTY GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY



Presidents Message: I just returned from the show in Bossier City, Louisiana, it was a nice drive, great show. I met many interesting and very talented members of their club. They have a lot of class activities, attend fieldtrips all over their state and other states as well. I did pick up a few minerals and will be bringing them to our next meeting.

I have heard from Kelly Howell that Paul received our card. His surgery went well and hopefully has now started school.

I hope to see all of you at our meeting September 11, 2011 at 2 P. M., Please try to bring a friend or two, lets share the growth of our club. Our club is only as great as the people in attendance.

Thank you,

Wanda Reynolds
President WCGMS

P. S. Mineral of The Month "Azurite"
Need a volunteer to do this (Tim Morrison has a power point presentation, so just need someone to use it or make up their own program on it)
Anyone interested can contact me. Wanda Reynolds email: dragon.reynolds@hotmail.com

Birthstone August: PERIDOT

COLOR: shades of green usually from yellow-green to greenish yellow.

HARDNESS: 6.5-7

Peridot: (pronounced pair-a-doe) is the gem variety of olivine. Olivine, which is actually not an official mineral, is composed of two minerals: fayalite and forsterite. Fayalite is the iron rich member with a pure formula of Fe_2SiO_4 . Forsterite is the magnesium rich member with a pure formula of Mg_2SiO_4 . Olivine's formula is written as $(Mg, Fe)_2SiO_4$ to show the substitution of the magnesium and iron. Peridot is usually closer to forsterite than fayalite in composition although iron is the coloring agent for peridot. The best colored peridot has an iron percentage of less than 15% and includes nickel and chromium as trace elements that may also contribute to the best peridot color.

Gem quality peridot comes from Myanmar, Pakistan and Egypt these gems are rarer and of better quality and thus quite valuable approaching the *per* cart value of top gemstones. An estimated 80-95% of all the world production of peridot comes from Arizona. Arizona gem material is of lesser quality, but is far more abundant and is therefore much more affordable.

This information can be found on Google.

September 11- Monthly meeting: Program-
"Variety in The Mineral World" by Mark Vining
Mineral of the Month – AZURITE

October 9- Monthly meeting: Program- TBA
Mineral of the month –QUARTZ

November 13 – Monthly meeting: Program -
Stuff grab bags for WCGMS show
Mineral of the Month – STILBITE

December 11 – Christmas Party
Mineral of the Month – TOURMALINE

FIELD TRIPS

September – To be announced (petrified wood)

October – To be announced (mineral)

November – To be announced (agate)

WCGMS Website is: www.wcgms.org
check it out. There are some great items of
interest.

Editors Notes: *All newsletter submissions
need to be received by the 20th of each month.
All items received after that date will be put
into the following month's edition.*

From the SCFM Newsletter:

To whom it may concern

My name is Eva Lyon and I am working with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, American Geological Institute and other partners to organize and coordinate the 2011 National Fossil Day. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to participate in this year's National Fossil Day, which will take place on Wednesday, October 12, 2011. This event is in conjunction with Earth Science Week, as sponsored by the American Geological Institute.

As part of the Paleontological Resource Act of 2009, U.S. Federal agencies have been mandated to promote public understanding of the importance of our nation's fossil resources. The National Park Service and its partners believe that one of the best ways to accomplish this is through National Fossil Day.

This is only the second year for National Fossil Day, so we hope to build upon the success of our last event and make this year even better. This is where you come in; we are seeking to bring on board new partners from across the country to join in our effort to promote public appreciation and stewardship of fossils, as well as foster a greater understanding of their scientific and educational values. Many of our other events for the day including presentations, mock digs and fossil identification games, among other educational opportunities for children and the public.

In an effort to contact as many people as possible, I have reached out to you as representatives of large, over-arching gem and mineral societies in hope that you will be able to spread the word to your respective communities. In my effort I have come to realize that there are far more rock hounds in this country than I ever could have imagined !

In order to get a better idea of what we do, I encourage you to visit our website at:
<http://nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday/index.cfm>

Thank you,
Eva Lyon
National Fossil Day Coordinator
GeoCorp America Guest Scientist
National Park Service
Phone: (703) 379-2880 ext. 249

< national.fossil.day@gmail.com >

The Mineral Azurite

Azurite owes its name to the beautiful azure-blue-color, which makes it a very popular and well known mineral. It usually occurs with green *malachite*, which may form green stains or specks on azurite crystals or aggregates. The two minerals sometime occur admixed or banded together, forming what is called “azure-malachite” in the gem and mineral trade. A more rare azurite mixture, known as “bluebird”, is azurite mixed with dark red *cuprite*. Azurite, “azure-malachite”, and “bluebird” all have gem uses.

In some localities, the Azurite undergoes a chemical change and loses some *hydroxyl*, altering the azurite to malachite, but retaining the crystal shape of the original azurite. Sometimes only part of the azurite is altered to malachite while the other part remains as azurite. Such specimens are green on one end and blue on the other end.

Linarite specimens are sometimes mistakenly sold as azurite, since they both occur in the same locations and may strikingly resemble each other. However, simple tests on physical properties can accurately distinguish the two.