

May 2011

PICKIN'S AND DIGGIN'S

WILLIAMSON COUNTY GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY



Presidents Message: The May meeting was well attended with several people bring their show and tell items. I brought several different items I bought at the Alpine Show. Larry Amundson had a collection of different stones he had collected while living in Panama, which were very interesting.

The nominating committee announced their selections for officers:

President - Wanda Reynolds
2nd Vice President - Bekki Miracle
Secretary - Dana Schubert.

Voting will take place at the June 5th annual picnic.

Kelly Howell gave a very informative class on "First Aid" which some of will appear a few pages later in this newsletter.

See you all at the Picnic at Berry Spring Park, come have a great time.

Wanda Reynolds
WCGMS - President

May Birthstone = Emerald

The **Gemstone Emerald** is the green variety of the mineral Beryl. Emerald is both the *May* birthstone and the *Zodiac Stone* for the constellation of Cancer.

Emerald gemstones are associated with patience, understanding, and foresight. The wonderful green color of emerald is unparalleled in the gem kingdom. Emerald's precious green color is caused by small amounts of chromium and enhanced by traces of iron. Unlike other beryls, emeralds usually contain inclusions and other flaws. These flaws are not looked on as negative aspects for emerald like they would be for other gemstones. Indeed, these flaws are considered part of the character of the stone and are used to assure the purchaser of a natural stone.

Even artificial emeralds often contain flaws, however as the process of growing artificial emeralds mimics the way nature does it (slow crystal growth from molten mix). Nearly all emeralds, even many "natural" stones, have been treated to improve clarity, generally by immersing them in oil. For gemstones, a green colored oil is sometimes used, "improving" the color as well. Unfortunately, the oil may evaporate over the years, making flaws appear where none were visible at the time of purchase. A high-grade mineral oil may be used to improve the appearance.

From the Amethyst Galleries, Inc. Copyright 1995-2011

FRIENDS AND FOSSIL FINDS

Well I had to meet friends from Canada on their way home from a few months in Mission, TX. We arranged to meet for breakfast at McDonald's in Lampasas as they drove north (ulterior motive on my part). After a nice visit and some food they hit Hwy 281 heading north and I thought "what the heck, I'm close so let me check out some of the new spots and really see whats

there.”

Thirty minutes later I was picking up chnoids, clams and even limonite after pyrite crystals. I found a couple of good hands full of Herterasters sp., two Neithea sp., Ceratostreon sp., Texigyphaea sp., and some other stuff within 20 feet of where I parked.

About 30 minutes into the hunt a very friendly lady pulled up, rolled down the window and asked what I had found. I answered “a few echinoids” and she says, “If you want to follow me up to the ranch you are welcome to look around our stock tanks, there's lots of spiny echinods there.” Well how can I refuse and offer like that, so off we went up the road. We stopped at the house so she could change shoes and then she gave me directions and opened the gate to the dirt road leading up the draw to the stock tank.

I headed up the dirt road through the pasture, opened the gate and was greeted by about 75 black Angus cattle wondering who I was. I drove on up the hill to the tank, guarded by an Angus bull and wondered how this venture would turn out. I passed without incident, went up the hill and turned around so I was headed out in case the bull decided I wasn't friendly. Luckily it was hot and he thought the shade of an oak grove was preferable to me rooting around in the banks of his watering hole and sauntered off uninterested.

I carefully searched the roadbed, hillside and banks of the stock tank and found much less than I had at my roadside spot so after an hour and just a dozen interesting but not spectacular finds I headed back down the hill, let myself through the cattle encrusted gate, took a few oak grove pictures and headed back to the ranch house.

I stopped to say thank you for the Texas hospitality explaining that I didn't find those spiny echies, assured the owner I had parked on the dirt road so as not to start a grass fire, left a small amethyst cluster I had collected in Canada before my move south and headed back to my spot.

Ten minutes later I was picking up more of what I had found earlier as well as a new find a really nice individual rudis, Liopistha, one Lorioia rosana, and then everywhere, herteraster of all size some two deep on what was a hillside out wash. Now I could be very selective. I have never seen so many echies together in one spot for 15 feet. It was like a 50 pound bag had been poured on the ground. In the end I brought home and am cleaning over 200 of these. The very best will go into my collection and the rest will be there for grab bag contents next year's show by WCGMS.

For me, this was a dream day in the field, seeing my old friends at the start, meeting a fine Texas ranch owner open to allowing collecting and spending a few fine hours picking up Lower Cretaceous fossils all within 75 minutes of my front door.

by- Bill Morgenstern.

HIKING ESSENTIALS FOR SAFETY

Taking just a few minutes to plan and prepare can turn a simple outing into a wonderful outing.

Always let someone know where you will be hiking.

Best to go with a hiking partner or a group.

Check weather conditions prior to going.

Take plenty of water and snacks.

First Aid kit-band aids, gloves, hand sanitizer or a package of wipes.

If diabetic or other medical condition take into consideration timing of medication, food and activity. Special consideration for diabetic or asthma carry rescue glucose tablets for low blood sugar and emergency inhaler for asthma attack.

Know your and your travel partners limitations.

Take your mobile phone but do not rely on it 100%. Be aware of your surroundings and know your limitations.

A Good idea to have a card in a all weather case with any and all medical problems you may have and also what medication your are taking either on your person or attached to you backpack or message bag.

By—Kelly Howell.

WCGMS- Monthly Schedule for June- December 2011

June 5-picnic and rock swap at Berry Springs Park-
vote-for new officers Mineral of the Month - FLUORITE

July 10-Monthly meeting: New Officers take over
Program: Looking for someone to present
Mineral of the Month - PYRITE

August 14- Monthly meeting: Programs- Bekki Miracle-
Jewelry making
Mineral of the month - GYPSUM

September 11- Monthly meeting: Program- Bill
Morgenstern- Proper Identification and labeling of
specimens, setting up an exhibit case
Mineral of the Month – QUARTZ

October 9- Monthly meeting: Program- Will Holton-
Agate stained glass
Mineral of the month - AZURITE

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

December 11 – Christmas Party
Mineral of the Month - TOURMALINE

FIELD TRIPS

August – To be announced (fossils)

September – To be announced (pertrified wood)

October – To be announce (mineral)

November – To be announced (agate)

SCFM ORGANIZATION SHOW DATES FOR 2011

Aug 13- 14
Baton Rouge, LA, Baton Rouge Gem & Mineral Show
at Fraternal Oder of Police

Aug 20- 21
Bossier City, LA- Bossier Civic Center

Aug 27- 28
Jasper, TX- Pine County Gem and Mineral Show at
Civic Center

Sept 3 -4
Arlington, TX- Arlington Gem and Mineral Show at the
Arlington Convention Center

Sept 3- 4
Denison, TX – Texoma Rockhounds at the Denison
Senior Center

Oct 8-9
Temple, TX- Tri-City Gem and Mineral Shoe at the
Mayborn Civic Center

Oct 14-16
Victoria, TX- Victoria Gem and Mineral Show at the
Community Center

Oct 21- 23
Austin, TX- Austin Gem and Mineral Show at Palmer
Event Center

Oct 29 - 30
Glen Rose, TX- Paleo Society of Dallas at Somerville
Epo. Center on Hwy 67

Nov 5- 6
Amarillo, TX- Golden Spread Gem and Mineral Show
at Amarillo Civic Center Exhibition Hall

Nov 5-6
Midland, TX – Midland Gem and Mineral Show at
Midland Center

Nov 12-13
Humble, TX Houston Gem and Mineral show at
Humble Civic Center (8233 Will Clayton PKWAY)

Dec 3 -4
Round Rock, TX- Paleo Society of Austin Show at Old
Settlers Park next to Dell Diamond

Dec 10-11
De Ridder, LA.- De Ridder Gem and Mineral Show at
Beauregard Parish Fairground

*Editor's Note: Deadline for all newsletter submissions
will be 20th of the month.*

