**A.F.M.S. Newsletter**

**American Federation of Mineralogical Societies**

**Serving Seven Regional Federations**

**Volume 57, Number 6**

**May 2004**

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**Read and Share...**

**Loud & Clear...**

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Visit the AFMS Website ([www.amfed.org](http://www.amfed.org))

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**A Show For All America**

by Catherine D. Smith

For meetings and shows, a rock hound knows
The road is to Syracuse.
It's paved in quartz and garnet gems
And well worn by our use.

The splendor of quartz calls out to all
In welcome to New York's upstate.
American Federation Clubs,
Come, help us celebrate!

At last, our chance in all these years
To host you gems of friends
You'll come from east, west, north and south.
To all, our warmth extends.

We offer comforts and fellowship
At our convention site,
Superb exhibits and retail wares,
Hands-on for young ones' delight.

So aim for that highway of garnet and quartz
Just west of Baum's Yellow Brick Road
And share and enjoy the fantasy worlds
That Earth's hidden strata hold.
FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK
from Marve Starbuck, AFMS President

A heartily thank you to all the people who have accepted all the responsibilities of their respective jobs. I also want to give a hearty thank you to those of you who are doing a super job, and no one knows better than you how good a job you are doing. So again, thank you, thank you, thank you.

Most of all, I want to talk to ALL of you who are not doing as good a job as you should be doing. Hopefully, I, or we can assist you in doing a better job. First, you have to ask yourself, did you accept this job to fill a vacancy, or so you could say, I am chairman of such and such a committee; or a desire to do a better job than has been done. Several years ago, a committee that was no longer needed, and hadn’t functioned for a long time was dissolved. When the chairman of said committee heard it was being dissolved, the comment was...”Oh, don’t do that, how can I say I’m on the Executive Committee, if you dissolve that committee?” Are you there to do the job, or so you can say this? If the desire is not there, then it is my estimation that the club, Regional Federation, or the AFMS should be looking for another person to fill the position.

If your needs for not doing a better job are financial, seek assistance. Perhaps your club or Federation can help you financially. If you actually don’t know what your job is SUPPOSED TO BE, ask for a copy of the By-Laws, or Operations Procedure Manual, or any other documents that might help you. Don’t be afraid to ask questions, and if one person can’t answer them, then ask someone else. Or maybe they can tell you who to ask for answers. It is extremely important for the Rockhound Family to have the best leadership possible.

My wife, Kitty, was Chairman of our Federation Nominating this year. Upon seeking nominees from the members on the committee, one member she contacted by phone to ask for suggestions and opinion stated, “I didn’t know I was on the Nominating Committee.” This person has been on the committee for THREE YEARS! Is this an isolated case, or is it widespread? You tell me.

Again, let me thank all of you all over the country who are doing a great job, and for those of you NOT doing a great job, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, try to do a better one. The clubs and Federations are being short changed if you are not!

It won’t be very long before we will be meeting in Syracuse, and I’m looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible there!

‘Til then,

Marve

GEMSTONE AUCTION
from Bonnie Olssmann

Each year the Intermountain Faceters Guild holds a Gemstone Auction of donated stones during the Northwest Federation Convention. This year the auction will take place on Saturday, July 4 at 1:30 P.M. Proceeds from the auction are donated to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation which uses the interest from contributions to fund scholarships for graduate earth science students.

The 2004 auction will celebrate the lives of three master faceters, two of whom passed away last year, Carl Unruh and Cliff Jackson. They contributed many skills to the faceting hobby, inspired faceters to try new techniques and cuts, and wrote about their ideas in "Off-the-Dap" the IFG Bulletin. Cliff founded the Intermountain Faceting Guild and chaired many Guild Conferences. Carl Unruh was the Guild's only Bulletin Editor and his color pages were always filled with new cuts and new techniques. It was quite a blow when these two men died just two days apart November 30 and December 3, 2003. The faceting world lost two of its most dedicated faceters.

Quincy Howell is the third faceter who contributed to the faceting hobby. Even though he passed away several years ago, he was the pioneer of faceting teachers. He invited 100 students into his home to teach them this skill and cut over 6,000 stones. His stones were unique and mostly his own designs.

This year's auction will allow others to own some of the stones cut by these pioneers! Dick Glimann collected these memorial stones, and mounted them so they can be worn as jewelry. Ed Romack will be the auctioneer and he hopes you will bid high on these fine stones.

Don't miss this opportunity to own one of these stones cut by Carl Unruh, Cliff Jackson and Quincy Howell, The Northwest's master faceters.

Information on the Northwest Federation Convention can be found on the Federation website <www.amfed.org/nfs>.
Retaining New Members

from Bill Smith, AFMS President-Elect

I don’t think there is anything more discouraging than to have new members join your club and then not have them renew. Several years ago Janet and I were the membership committee for our local club. At the end of the year we had new members that did not renew their membership. I called each member or couple and asked them why. Most often I got the answer, it wasn’t what we were looking for. I would counter with, what were you looking for? Usually got another vague answer so just got to the point. I would say, we are trying to improve the way our club operates and did you have a problem with how the meetings were conducted? Most often the general answer would be, the meetings are too long, boring and contained little substance. I then monitored a couple of meetings and observed the following and will also include what the club did to improve.

1. Some verbal committee reports were very long hard to understand, and contained little information for a newcomer. The club implemented the policy of printing all committee reports in the club newsletter. Example: The field trip chairperson would include a detailed report of the upcoming field trip. At the meeting he would have extra copies of the report along side the field trip sign-up sheet. When it was his turn to report he would just say the next field trip information was in the newsletter and extra copies are with the sign-up sheet in the back. Any questions see me at the break.

2. For correspondence, mention what it is and that it is at the front table and if interested come up and read it during the break. If it is important enough to read at the meeting then it is important enough to print in the newsletter.

3. The display table was often lacking and some members would spend considerable time talking about the common rocks they found, food they had, where they stayed, etc on their last field trip. The display chairman took the following action: He would contact at least one person with nice material and have them display at the next meeting. For example, if the display table was opal he would contact someone with a nice opal display. He also asked those that were long winded to do a write-up of field trips for the newsletter. Would make interesting reading over a cup of coffee in the morning and committee members will know what is going on when it is brought up at the meeting which could save considerable time.

4. When the president announces a break for refreshments for 15 minutes and then will have the program he should mean 15 minutes. A 45 minute break cuts into 30 minutes of your program.

5. If you have streamlined your meeting, you should now have about an hour for the program. Over an hour and members will get up and walk out.

6. Try to cover as much business as possible at your monthly board meetings. At least the officers and committee members will know what is going on when it is brought up at the meeting which could save considerable time.

7. With the constant turn over of officers and committee personnel it can be difficult to keep your meetings streamlined, therefore have someone appointed to monitor the meetings.

Meaningful meetings are just one step in keeping new members but a very important one. Good luck in building your membership.

Bill

AFMS Endowment Fund Update

from Joy Bourne, Endowment Fund Chair

Last month, we showed you pictures of eight of the spectacular prizes being offered in the 2004 AFMS Endowment Fund Raftle - and promised to keep you posted as new prizes arrive from our most generous rockhound friends around the Federation.

In late March, we received an exquisite and rare addition to the prize list from members in the South Central Federation of Mineralogical Societies. This latest prize is a gorgeous 40x20 mm cabochon flawlessly cut from Louisiana Opal. The spectacular, fiery blue and green stone is the result of a real "team effort" which was initiated and coordinated by Ike House, SCFMS Bulletin Aids Chair. Involved in the project were the Ark-La-Tex Gem and Mineral Society, which "commissioned" the stone; club members Joe and Lee Beasley, who procured the stone; and SCFMS Executive Vice-President and AFMS Director, newsletter editor, Hall of Fame member and good friend, Bill Alcorn, who crafted the finished cabochon.

Included with this prize are copies of two articles, each focused on this spectacular and rare material, from "Rock & Gem" magazine. The whole prize is valued at $200-250. That figure is an estimated show price - Ike says confidently that it "probably would sell for much more at retail, as it has so much fire."

The 2004 Endowment Fundraffle tickets cost $5.00 each or 5 for $20, and a member of your regional federation has tickets available to sell right now. You will find a list of these regional federation Endowment Fund committee members on the AFMS website at http://www.amfed.org/endow2004.htm . The committee members will be selling the tickets until June 15th. Club presidents may wish pick up a block of ten or more tickets for their own club members, and if that is the case, our committee people will be happy to oblige. After June 15th, you may still purchase tickets by contacting me - until I leave for the convention on July 7.

Of course, tickets will also be on sale at the convention right up until 5:00 p.m., July 10, and you can view the actual prizes at the AFMS table on the show sales floor. Drawing for prizes will be held at the conclusion of the Annual Dinner and Awards ceremony on Saturday, July 10. Holders of winning tickets do not need be present at the drawing in order to win. We’ll be happy to ship prizes, or pass them along to your designated person(s) who can furnish written permission from you to receive your prize.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me at:
Joy Bourne, AFMS Endowment Fund Chair
RR #1, Box 159A
Towanda, PA 18848-9739
(570) 265-6454
e-mail csprings@epix.net

We have more prizes promised, which are yet to come. Some very special items are being prepared as of this writing, and I will keep you informed as they arrive. Marty Hart has agreed update the AFMS website information on a regular basis, too, so be sure to check the website for the latest information.

Thank you all for your valued support of this important effort on behalf of the AFMS Foundation.

AFMS Newsletter - May, 2004
As I write this, it's March 1, the snow is melting pretty fast, birds are migrating North. Think July. Think lots of Fun. And think Syracuse, where a great show and convention awaits in less than 90 days from the time you read this.

Recently I had an E-mail from a former president of EFMLS who said, "Your articles about the Syracuse convention are making me think maybe I should get parking my bags now." Obviously, that is good to hear as we have a strong cadre of dedicated Syracuse club members working long and hard to bring you a super show and convention. We continue to add things -- latest being a realistic Canadian quarry exhibit with unbelievable huge crystals.

In this issue, we give you several websites so you can really start searching and formulating your vacation plans in earnest. Central New York is a neat area that many of you have never visited, I bet. So, we encourage you to build in some extra days to maximize what this area has in store. Remember it has been 7 years since "American" has been in the East (Mississippi) and the American convention/show has never been in New York before! I will detail several Herkimer digging sites as well. We will close with a real need for your help/cooperation.

First, a reminder re Ramada Inn (Hdq'rs Hotel) Reservations: You cannot use the national 800 number to get the rate or room. Instead, call 315-457-8670 and tell them you want a room for the Eastern Federation convention. Rate will be $89 including a cooked to order breakfast.

Helpful Websites for the visiting nitty gritty for you:

- www.iloveny.com  This will let you see the regions of interest: Finger Lakes (where the Syracuse convention and show will be) and Leatherstocking Country (area where the Herkimer Diamond digging places are located). I suggest you contact above site for their nifty 1/4" thick booklet "I love NY -- New York State Travel Guide and Vacation Map." They also have a toll-free phone -- 1-800-CALLINY.

Syracuse Convention and Visitors Bureau -- can tell you every thing and anything you might wish to know about the area in and around Syracuse within a 25-mile radius. Phone: 1-800-234-4797. Website: www.VisitSyracuse.org.

Coveted Herkimer locations (all fee locations):
- driving time from Syracuse, 1 hour and 30 minutes. Here, is the info so you can make some good judgments, plus we list the nearest (timewise) to Syracuse:
  - Treasure Mountain Diamond Mine, Little Falls, NY. This is the newest of the four we will cover, plus it is the one made famous when those Quartz scepters began hitting the market from there in the mid 90s. Their website has outstanding photos and says it is "Easy Digging," which granted is easier than the next two, but decent hammer/chisel work for the most part. They have camp-
  - HAVING FUN - JUNIOR ACTIVITIES
  - ISMAEL SANDREZ AND HIS MINERAL MITES NEWSLETTER
  - by Jim Braceth-Thompson
  - In my last couple columns, I issued a call for a few names of local youth leaders who have gone above and beyond in serving you (the contributor during club meetings and shows or through community outreach to local schools, Boy and Girl Scout groups, and elsewhere to teach our kids about the earth sciences and lapidary arts.

  This month, I'd like to recognize Ismael Sanchez, Advisor to the "Mineral Mites" of the Kern County Mineral Society. I belong to the Ventura Gem and Mineral Society, and this past weekend while holding our annual gem show, Ismael pitched in, as he's done every year the past several years, and helped in running our juniors activities booth. Later, in thanking him over dinner, he shared a number of good things he's been doing, but I'd like to single out one in particular: the "Mineral Mites Newsletter."

  Working with assistant advisors, Ismael has pulled together a group of his Mineral Mites to put together this juniors newsletter -- a newsletter by and for fellow junior members. The "Mineral Mites Newsletter" consists of the Advisor's Report (by Ismael), Assistant Advisor's Report, junior officers contributions, an events calendar, a "Mineral of the Month" column, old clippings from articles in the KCMS club and other rock club newsletters, jokes, poems, games, juniors activities, notice of awards for Mineral Mites accomplishments, and federation reports. In addition to the Mineral Mites officers, all juniors are encouraged to become involved in the publication.

  Ismael shared two issues with me, and they are fantastic! In fact, they are equal, if not superior, to many a regular society newsletter! They have contributions from many of the juniors, along with wonderful clippings of mineral specimens and artwork. I'm hoping the newsletter is submitted into competition for the EFMLS annual awards because it is so clearly deserving of recognition.

  In addition to the newsletter, at any one time, Ismael is overseeing anywhere from 30 to 44 kids, assisting them with workshop activities, helping them exhibit at the Kern County and other nearby rock shows and the county fair, guiding them in conducting their own Mineral Mites meetings, and taking them on field trips for collecting (while demonstrating his boogie board skills at Moonstone Beach in San Simeon!).

  I'd like to recognize more good people like Ismael. If names come to mind, please send them to me with a brief description of their activities and accomplishments and their phone numbers and/or email addresses so that I can contact them myself (send to jbraceth@adelphia.net or call 805-659-3577). Let's share the wisdom and thank dedicated youth advisors like Ismael who show us that, yes, it's possible to learn while -- always having fun!
In the March 2004 issue of the AFMS Newsletter the AFMS Scholarship Honorees for the California, Midwest and Rocky Mountain Federations were announced. In this issue I have the pleasure of announcing the last three Honorees from Eastern, Northwest and South Central. They are:

EASTERN FEDERATION

DR. ASISH R. RASU
Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences University of Rochester, Rochester, New York

Dr. Rasu began his career at the University of Calcutta, India. He received his M.S. in Geophysical Sciences at the University of Chicago, and his Ph.D. in Geology at the University of California, Davis in 1975.

He has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in mineralogy and petrology-geochemistry, and graduate courses in trace element and isotope geochemistry. He has supervised graduate students receiving their M.S. and Ph.D. beginning in 1980 through 1997. His interests are in Petrogenesis of igneous and metamorphic rocks; geochemical evolution of the earth’s crustal mantle system; mantle plume volcanism and chemical differentiation of the earth; magmatism and tectonics; geochemistry of groundwater and isotope hydrology, trace element and radiogenic and stable isotope geochemistry; thermal ionization and plasma source mass spectrometry. He has been involved in numerous publications.

NORTHWEST FEDERATION

DR. CRAIG M. WHITE
Professor of Geosciences, Boise State University, Boise, Idaho

Dr. White received his B.A. in Geology at Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, his M.S. from the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin and his Ph.D. from University of Oregon, Eugene Oregon.

Although Dr. White was born in Washington, D.C. and grew up outside New York City, he has lived in the Northwest for the last 30 years and in Boise since 1980.

His primary research interest in the field of igneous petrology and volcanology. He did his Masters thesis research in Antarctica where he was part of the last multi-disciplinary reconnaissance expedition to explore a previously unvisited part of the continent. His Ph.D. dissertation research focused on the volcanic rocks in the western Cascade Range of central Oregon. Since then he has carried out grant funded research on shallow mafic intrusions in the Skaergaard region of East Greenland and at the western margin of the Snake River Plain in eastern Oregon. Recent work on the petrology of basalts also includes a geochemical and Sr-isotopic study of lavas in the central and southern parts of the Western Snake River Plain in Idaho. In addition to petrologic studies he has recently begun working on problems related to the explosive basaltic volcanism that resulted from the mixing of magma and water in Plu-Pleistocene Lake Idaho. Dr. White is married and has a grown daughter. He has authored a number of publications.

SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION

DR. JAMES SPRINKLE
Professor of Geological Sciences, University of Texas at Austin, Texas. Nominated by the Austin Paleontological Society

Since the formation of the Austin Paleontological Society in 1981 Dr. Sprinkle has served as a member and advisor to the Society. In the continuing support of the club he has presented numerous programs for meetings and encouraged students to also present programs.

Dr. Sprinkle received his B.S. at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, his M.A. from Harvard University and his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He has taught courses in Plate Tectonics and Earth History, Paleobiology, Field Geology, and Paleontological Nomenclature and Techniques.

Dr. Sprinkle is an invertebrate paleontologist who studies Paleozoic marine communities and ecosystems and specializes in early (and now mostly extinct) echinoderms. He has worked on late Paleozoic echinoderm-derm communities in Montana, Oklahoma and Texas. Most recently he has collected echinoderms in the Early Ordovician and then later on the Late Cambrian echinoderms. Among the most important echinoderms that we have found in our Early Ordovician field work in the Rockies are two new and extremely primitive crinoids, now being described. One crinoid known from a single specimen found near the base of the Ordovician in southern Idaho, is the earliest true crinoid ever collected. The other crinoid known from seven specimens from slightly higher in the Early Ordovician of western Utah, is the most morphologically primitive crinoid now known.

He has received several Grants, written numerous papers, and received Honors, Awards and Fellowships.

The Scholarship Foundation is proud to include these illustrious Honorees to the many who have gone on before them.

Is YOUR club contributing to the AFMS Scholarship foundation?

All contributions are deposited in interest bearing accounts. Only the interest is used to provide scholarships to graduate students.

Each Participating Federation selects an honorary recipient who in turn selects two graduate scholarship recipients each year.

Thus far, the Foundation has awarded more than $1 million in scholarships!
Has your club sent in the name of the individual or couple that you would like to recognize as your "Rockhound of the Year" for 2004? It's not too late! Your regional federation chairperson is eager to receive your submission. Just send the name of the person (or couple) that you would like to recognize, along with a statement (50 words max.) of how valuable the individual or couple is to your club. Don't forget to include the name of your club and the name of the individual (or group) sending the submission. Don't know who your regional federation chairperson is? You can find it on the AFMS Website (www.amfed.org).

It is a pleasure to announce the latest people named as AFMS Club Rockhounds of the Year.

**Eastern Federation**

The AFMS Rockhound of the Year from the Central Pennsylvania Rock and Mineral Club is Don Kauffman. They say that the number one fear among humans is speaking in public. I really think it may well be writing. It is like pulling teeth to get folks to write articles for the newsletter, but Don Kauffman has blessed this club with interesting articles on his many interests. He has also provided leadership in other areas including our involvement with the "Navy Park" project.

Nominated by R.J. Harris, President

**California Federation**

The Long Beach California Mineral & Gem Society nominates their longest standing member as Rockhound of the Year. Einar LaFlotesness himself cannot quite remember how long he has been a member and since the records have suffered a cat-attrapty we settle for a long time. Einar has been president several times and has served in all offices and many appointed positions. He always focused on fiscal responsibility, increasing membership and education through lab activities, programs and field trips. He is still the person the members call to identify a certain mineral on a particular dig site. He has served as liaison to the city or senior center as he was called to do. We sincerely hope will continue on the board for a long time to come.

The Sacramento California Mineral Society wishes to honor the two members (one for 2003 and one for 2004), who through their vision and determination change our club into a cohesive, forward moving organization that the young and old want to join. Les Clark and Judd Darling spent hours and hours meeting with the Sacramento County Airport System at Mather Field to negotiate a rental agreement that would give us a clubhouse and a shop. With the shop, our club became a club of doers. New members join because of the shop facilities and our excellent instructors. Both men have been president our club. They have served in all elected and appointed positions during the 15 plus years as members. Whenever a job needs doing they are there with their vehicles, a pair of helping hands and new ideas for improvement of our facilities and teaching techniques. They have been instrumental in supplying our clubhouse with furniture and features that make our members more comfortable. When we set up our new SHOW WOW they are always their first to help as well as show new members how to set up safely. Outstanding and reliable members such as these is what makes our club the success that it is.

The South Bay Lapidary and Mineral Society would like to nominate Cathy Mills for the education through sharing award. Cathy has been a member of the South Bay Club for many years. Cathy has held classes for many members who were interested in learning how to make beautiful jewelry using silver and gold. Cathy is a great teacher with the patience of Job. She is like all teachers, you do it over and over until you get it right. All of her students are very grateful to Cathy and her patience. Cathy always has a beautiful case in our show every year. People looking at her case always ask how does she get such a high polish? Her jewelry is beautiful and awe inspiring.

Submitted by Oscar C. Eddon, Federation Director

**Rocky Mountain Federation**

The Mingus Gem & Mineral Club in Cottonwood, Arizona, nominate Fred Shaw as Rockhound of the Year. Fred has been a lifelong collector, slicer and polisher of petrified wood. Before he came to our area he set up the petrified wood store at Vantage in Oregon. He founded our club in the early 1970's and was the enthusiastic and tireless worker behind our first show in 1977. We have just finished our twentieth eight show, and Fred's energy and encouragement has enlivened every one. In our club he has held every role from President downwards, and done the same in our show, including building the exhibit cases and setting up the electrical connections. Fred is now in his eighties, as enthusiastic as ever. This Spring he refused to let a replacement knee slow him down, and is taking the lead in designing and modeling our long awaited workshop. Fred embodies the spirit of friendship on which our club thrives, we are all proud of him.

Submitted by Peter Martin, President

**South Central Federation**

The Waco Gem and Mineral Club of Waco, Texas has elected Jerry Steger to be their 2004 Rockhound of the Year. Jerry is always willing to help. If there is a job to be done, he is more than willing to step in and do it. He is especially busy during our shows each year. He provides materials for us to give away. He helps to set up and take down. He is everywhere and always helpful. The club appreciates Jerry's smiling face and friendly cooperation.

Submitted by Bill Christmas

**Northwest Federation**

West Seattle Rock Club recognizes Toby Cozens as their 2004 Club Rockhound of the Year. She has served the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies as Treasurer for many years. She wears the hat of ALAA Treasurer and is the Northwest Federation's Representative to the American Scholarship Foundation. In the Northwest Federation she was Treasurer for many years, coordinates the NFMS Club at Large and was very instrumental in raising funds for the Junior Endowment Fund.

Toby joined, along with her husband Frank, the West Seattle Rock Club in 1966. Frank was the rockhound, remembered by the case that Toby shares with us of his carved obsidian ships. Toby was secretary of the club for 3 years, newsletter editor for 3 years and the club's treasurer for most of the past 20 years. For our club she has always been the person coming up with new ideas and she works diligently to have our annual club show a success. Toby is the backbone of the West Seattle Rock Club.

We are proud to let everyone in on her latest accomplishment…Toby cut her first cab last year, after being in our club for 37 years. That's our West Seattle Rockhound for 2004.

Submitted by Audrey Vogelzang, President

The Umpqua Gem and Mineral Club of Roseburg, Oregon would like to nominate Don and Ellinora Young as our AFMS Rockhound of the Year for 2004. Don and Ellinora have been members since 1974. Both have held executive offices several times and have been a part of virtually all committee chairmanships. The youngs have opened their home to the club for meetings, potlucks, picnics and Don instructs various lapidary classes in their basement. They try hard to identify new member's rocks. Both have nice collections of fossils, crystals, mineral and various slabs and cabochons and will freely explain them to anyone interested. Don and Ellinora are a fixture at all Club activities; they.Speake solemnly of their time and ability. It is my pleasure to send in this nomination.

Mickey Sampson, Secretary

**Gulf Coast Federation**

The Umpqua Gem and Mineral Club would like to nominate Virgil and Donna Roethler as Rockhounds of the year. Virgil has served as club treasurer for a number of years. He works at the club shop teaching cabbing, maintaining the equipment and helping new comers. Donna has been club bulletin editor, winning several awards both from the South Central Federation and the American Federation. They are both there to help in the club booth, at our annual show. They are both all around ROCKHOUNDS.

Submitted by Bill and Lois Parrillo

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**FOR COMMERCIAL USE, THE INDIVIDUAL**

**SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR:**

GLYNDON, MD 21071-0302

**SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

AFMS CENTRAL OFFICE

2706 LASCASSAS PIKE

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615-893-8270

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**EDITORIAL COMMENTS – SUBMISSIONS**

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

AFMS NEWSLETTER – MAY, 2004
Archeological Sites

If you are a regular reader of this column (probably both implausible and impossible because the column itself is not regular), you may recall my report of the story of the gentlemen who were arrested for collecting archeological artifacts in Florida. The site was on Florida State land and was posted with signs noting that removal of Indian artifacts was prohibited. There was no notice prohibiting the collection of minerals or fossils. Notwithstanding the easily appreciated distinction between fossil coral and Indian artifacts, the collectors were arrested and spent the night in jail. They were released the next morning and eventually paid a small fine.

More recently I have received emails reporting the October 20, 2003 arrest of divers in Alabama while diving for artifacts in the Alabama River, near Selma Alabama, and emails reporting that on January 3, 2004 members of two families were detained and charged removing archeological resources from a protected area in the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (Cochine County, AZ) because their young children were picking up “rocks” (of a nature which I have not been able to determine). On September 6, 2003 two collectors in Texas were cited by an Army Corps of Engineers Ranger for taking “property” from an “old fort site” notwithstanding that none of the collected items with them qualified as an “artifact” and GPS evidence that they were not in the boundaries of the protected site. Note a connecting thread here? That’s right, proximity to protected archeological sites. Now all of the foregoing incidents may have been miscarriages of justice, but a reasonable collector should take notice and give a wide berth to protected archeological sites.

Based on what little I know of the subject, my impression is that the agencies charged with the protection of public lands are currently understaffed and underfunded. Also they have seen major, real thefts of artifacts from public lands. See, for example, the convictions (with jail time) for theft of artifacts from Death Valley National Park, reported in the January 21, 2004 Park Service Morning Reports. Understand that the field agents of these agencies are under considerable pressure, but abuses should be reported to their superiors and to our representatives in congress.

George Loud

The F.A.M.S. Newsletter is published monthly except January, July and August by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Address corrections and changes

Subscription Information

Distribution Questions

Each Regional Federation Club is entitled to receive three (3) copies of the AFMS Newsletter. These are sent to the President, Editor, and Secretary.

Subscriptions are $3.50 per year. Remit payment to the AFMS Central Office.

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THE ART OF DISPLAY

by June Culp Zeitner

June Culp Zeitner, well known author, collector and recipient of the first AFMS Recognition Award, has written many articles during her career. Many readers will know her from articles which appeared for years in Lapidary Journal and more recently in Rock & Gem Magazine.

This article, written in 1971 and most recently reprinted in Pickin's & Diggin's, newsletter of the Williamson Co. Gem & Mineral Society (Georgetown, TX), this article is still as valid today as it was when written.

To show off minerals and gems one need only learn and apply a few rules of art. Some are so elementary that most pebble-pups as well as advanced rockhounds know them, nevertheless, they are all important.

CLEANLINESS: Any dusty or finger printed specimen or case detracts from any display.

ARRANGEMENT: A pleasing arrangement has balance, good proportion, pleasing color harmony, rhythm, design and suitable background. Generally speaking there are two types of balance in art, formal and informal. If you can draw a line through the center of a design and find that each half is a mirror image of the other, that design is formal. If the two halves are not the same, the balance is informal. An old fashioned garnet brooch is usually formal in design. A modern free form brooch set with a garnet baroque would probably be informal in balance.

Formal balance is well suited to arrange cabochons for display. A group of slabs of dissimilar sizes and shapes lend themselves to informal balance. Why strive for balance? We want to show it off to the best advantage. Just as we would never take in things at a quick glance our eyes naturally seek the center of interest. If you placed a slab of electric blue chrysocolla in each corner of your show case they would tend to draw the eyes in four directions at once. Whatever you had planned for the center of interest in the middle of the case would be lost. Bright colors placed in a hit or miss manner spoil any feeling of balance and rhythm by causing the eye to jump.

One large specimen can be balanced by a group of smaller ones. One bright specimen can be balanced by several duller ones. The subject of color is important to rockhounds and we should know and understand the color wheel, the primary, secondary and tertiary colors and the basic color harmonies. A very bright color should be used in smaller amounts than muted shades or tints. The center of interest of any arrangement should be toward the center where the eye naturally falls first. If too many bright colors other than the center of interest are used the result is a "busy" or jumpy arrangement.

It is definitely worth the effort in arranging a gem or mineral display to carefully consider the color of every piece before deciding where to place it. The artistic use of color can make an average collection spectacular, while the poor use of color will make a superb collection seem like a dull jumble.

BACKGROUND: In the successful display of gems the background against which the gems are placed should be in keeping with the value of the gems. It should not detract from the color of your gems but should flatter every stone in the display. Tweed or calico would not be used to set off a faceted collection. Velvets, velours, silks an satins are more appropriate. However, as beautiful as red velvet is it would not be an appropriate background because red is a detracting color. After much experimenting, we have found that a pale blue satin, a grey tone of blue, is the most versatile of background material for mineral display. There is just enough color in this to set off tints as well as shades. Another wonderful background for gems or jewelry is the use of mirrors. A sparkling mirror multiplies the beauty of your gems.

Snowy white styrofoam is another suitable background. It can be cut in various shapes to enhance the beauty of a specimen and is useful in creating split levels of display. A specimen can also be made to stand in the precise position it looks best. Besides the ordinary background material many rockhounds with imagination use other devices to add interest. A piece of silvery driftwood against a sea-blue drop may be used to set off a collection of beach agates. A piece of ibidun pottery add interest to a turquoise display.

Under no circumstances should the background be so big, bright or unusual that it detracts from the real purpose of the exhibit.

LIGHTING: Good lighting is essential. Scenic agate slabs are best viewed with a light behind them. Spot lights are suitable for large spectacular pieces, but in most cases tube lights directly above or inside each display case are best. Natural light is a big help for home display. A big north or south window opposite your display give a good light.

FLAIR: For want of a better word I use flair to describe that something extra which the personality of the rockhounds stamps on his display. A beginning artist should learn the rules of art, however, we all know artists who have broken rules and come out on top. Not all gem displays follow the artists display rules, but you should learn the rules first before you build up enough faith in your flair to learn when it is right to break a rule or two if gem dealers and collectors would think of themselves more often as artists, many shops and collectors would greatly be enriched with very little expenditure. Display cases are not hard to build. With a little effort every hidden box of specimens could graduate into a real artistic display.

Endowment Raffle Prize

From Joy Bourne, AFMS Endowment Chair

Here is a sneak peak at the Louisiana Opal Cabochon which YOU could own if you hold the lucky ticket in the AFMS Endowment Fund Raffle. (See page 3 for more details.)

To view all the raffle items, visit the AFMS website at <www.amfed.org>.

This means apparent weight rather than actual weight. A good display can’t have the most massive or the brightest pieces at the top. It would appear too heavy. The eye is upset at seeing a display with a high center of gravity which looks as if it would topple over. In a display all on one level the larger items naturally go to the background, the more spectacular specimens toward he center and the smaller items in the foreground.

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