MEET US IN ST. LOUIS
by Willis Smith

The Greater St. Louis Association of Earth Science Clubs, Inc. (GSLAESCl) is sponsoring the 2005 AFMS/MWF Annual Show and Convention in West St Louis County on August 16-21, 2005. The Headquarters Hotel is the Marriott St Louis-West located at 660 Maryville Centre Drive, in Creve Couru, MO. The show is at Queeny Park about 4 miles away located near the City of Ballwin.

Attractions in St. Louis include The Gateway Arch (National Historic Site), Forest Park (Site of the 1904 Worlds Fair and includes St. Louis Zoo, Science Center, Art Museum, History Museum, and Muny Opera. Other attractions in the area include Grants Farm, Six Flags Over Mid-America, Butterfly House, Cardinals Baseball, Anheuser Busch Brewery, Shaw’s Gardens, The Museum of Transportation, and the Lewis and Clark Historic Site.

Activities at the headquarters hotel include All AFMS and MWF meetings as well as the past Presidents’ Luncheon, AFMS/MWF Awards Banquet and AFMS/MWF Editors Awards Breakfast. The Show is being held in the Greensfelder Recreation Center at Queeny Park. Show setup begins Thursday, August 18. Activities planned for Queeny Park include the MWF Council meeting, AFMS/MWF Competitive Judging, AFMS/MWF Endowment Fund Auctions, as well as the Show.

The show will feature a variety of retail dealers and we are expecting many special exhibits, including displays from the Missouri Mines Historic Site and The Mastodon Historic Site.

The Convention and Show Co-chairmen are Robert Morse, 636-462-4423 (rmorse@northhover.net) and Willis D. Smith, 314-521-8896 (cracks-s-at-juro.com). Robert Morse is taking care of the show activities and Willis Smith the rest of the activities.

For a complete schedule of activities, including lodging and field trip information and registration forms, visit the GSLAESCl website at <http://convention.stlearthsci.org>.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Presidents’ Message
- Honor Someone
- Vice Presidents’ Message
- Junior Activities
- AFMS Scholarship Challenge
- AFMS Endowment News
- Club Rockhound of the Year
- Safety First
- Truth and Some Consequences
- Thanks For Your Support
- CFMS Court Decision
- Help Preserve History
- Russ Trappnell
- International Relations
- Remembering Bob
- Intarsia Project
- The Darwin Awards
- Regional Federation Shows

AFMS Endowment News
Your AFMS Endowment Fund Committee has already been hard at work for several months lining up some ever-more-spectacular prizes for the 2005 AFMS Endowment Fund Raffle to be held at the 58th AFMS Convention in St Louis, on August 20, 2005.

Your regional committee chairmen will shortly begin selling tickets so that you, too, can participate in this drawing for these great prizes offered in the annual fundraiser to benefit the AFMS Endowment Fund. For the updated listing of who your regional chairman is, and color pictures and descriptions of all prizes being offered, Marty Hart, AFMS webmaster, assures us he will have the latest updates posted on the AFMS website at <www.amfed.org>.

As of the first of December, we already had four great prizes donated by AFMS members for the 2005 raffle. Thanks to Dee Holland (AFMS) and Shirley Lee (CFMS), we have two more beautiful opal pendants, crafted from stones in the Endowment Fund inventory by Dee and Shirley, and set in 14k gold. We also have a gorgeous necklace of Pecos “Diamonds,” from Howell Whiting, past president of RMFMS, (see picture). Howell says he wants people to know that Herkimer “Diamonds” are not the only “Diamonds” in the USA, and he wants everyone to see the western version!

Burla LaRue, of CFMS, has promised to send us another of his famous gold lost-wax casting pieces, and although we don’t yet know just what this year’s contribution will be, we know it will be a spectacular piece of jewelry! We will shortly be showing pictures of his gift and more in this newsletter, and on the website, and will be giving details about all the prizes as we receive them.

Our goal is to have at least one item from each of the seven regional Federations, and we’d like to invite anyone who is interested in contributing a special prize this year to contact us as soon as possible. If you or your club would be interested in sending a special prize for this worthy effort to help build the AFMS Endowment Fund, please get in touch now. We thank you all for your help.

Joy Bourne, AFMS Endowment Fund Chair
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(More + pictures on page 2)
THE AFMS
Proudly Serving
Seven Regional

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HOW IMPORTANT ARE DONATIONS?
from Bill Smith, AFMS President

In the November AFMS Newsletter I read the Scholarship Challenge letter written by Keith Harman. He challenged all Regional Federations to raise and donate to the AFMS Scholarship fund the equivalent of $1.00 per member in order to maintain the two scholarships to each participating Regional Federation.

I read in one of the Regional newsletters a note from the President that said their Endowment Fund needs the help of members and clubs. He also said we had to draw money from the fund several times in 2004 to help overcome budget shortages. He went on to say, if we expect our Federation to remain stable in the future, we will need to be able to utilize excess Endowment funds for our programs.

Many of our clubs have Endowment funds to cover extra expenses and/or scholarships. My local club has a Scholarship Endowment fund to help High School graduates entering the field of Geology in college.

As we all know, our Federation budgets, Regional and AFMS, depend primarily on membership income and we are continuing to decline in membership as expenses continue to climb. Endowment Funds could very well become the financial lively hood of the Federations.

There are also numerous charitable organizations very deserving of being funded as well as our church. Then nature gave us the largest disaster known to modern man with hundreds of thousands of people that will be without shelter, food, water, and medical assistance unless people like us provide help.

How important are our donations? Probably more than any of us will ever realize.

Until next month,
Bill

AFMS CLUB ROCKHOUND OF THE YEAR
REGIONAL CHAIRPERSONS:

California -
Barb Matz, PO Box 7086; Petaluma, CA 94955 <barbmatz@yahoo.com>.

Eastern -
Cathy Gaber, 5707 Northfield Rd; Bethesda, MD 20817 <bg@his.com>.

Midwest -
Fran Gutowski, 711 W Summerdale, Chicago, IL 60656 <gutkowski@Dearborn.com>.

Northwest -
Dick Parks, 2004 SE 134th; Vancouver, WA 98683.

Rocky Mountain -
Leon Gorrell, 813 Gold; Truth or Consequences, NM 87901 <lean81040@yahoo.com>.

South Central -
Dee Cable, 3348 S 21st St; Abilene, TX 79605 <spheresrus@aol.com>.

Southeast -
Billie Wright, 3304 Nottingham Rd; Ocean Springs, MS 39564 <asjbw@datasync.com>.

HONOR SOMEONE
by Cathy Gaber, AFMS Club Rockhound Chair

Will the real winner please step forward?

When you look at certain club members, do you ever have the feeling that those people really do a lot for the club? Those people are winners, but others who don’t know them have no idea. You can be a winner too by proposing a club member as the AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year. Every club can propose one member or a couple for this honor every year. It’s really very simple. All that is needed is:

club member’s name
your name (and office if any)
your club name and state
50 words about why the club member deserves to be honored. (Please send in an e-mail message, not as an attachment.)

Send this information to your federation representative, who will send it to me. (See next column.) Eastern and Northwest clubs can send it directly to me. Think how special your club and your special club members go unrecognized!

Cathy Gaber
<bg@his.com>
WIN\TER REFLECTIONS

By the time many read this message the annual trek to Tucson will be over and most will be back home. I have promised myself this trip every year for several years, but as usual I missed it again this year. My wife and I made the trip to Quartzsite several years back and on the return trip it was the time of the Tucson show we stopped over for two days and took in the show, we both agree it was the best vacation we ever took. The trip to Quartzsite was back in the late eighties and to this day I believe it was the greatest rock-hounding trip I have ever attended. I read some where after my return that there were over 50 thousand people out there in the desert that weekend. I remember we were standing on an over pass on I-10 and there were tailgaters as far as the eye could see in both directions. Sorry we don't read or hear too much about that event anymore.

Speaking of events, I know that many of our regional federations sponsor field trips for their member clubs. The Southeast Federation has the "Dixie Mineral Council" where Southeast member clubs take turns hosting collecting trips. To participate, your club must be a member of the SFMS and carry the SFMS Group Insurance policy. The club must also agree to host a field trip open to other Dixie member clubs each year. The Eastern Federation has the "Eastern Field Trip Association: which, although not actually run by the Federation, operates in a similar manner. The California Federation has several similar field trip opportun-ities each year organized by its Field Trip North and Field Trip South chairpersons.

In the Southeast, two notable trips come to mind. The first is a trip to Rucks Pit near Ft. Drum, Florida. This is the site where calcite and clams are found in addition to other fossil shells. Sometimes over 300 people participate in this annual event. The other notable trip is to Graves Mountain in Georgia and here, even the mine owner gets into the act by closing down mining operations and bringing in food and refreshments for a two day dig and rock swap.

I would be interested to know if any of the other Federation in AFMS hosts such events. This is one of the greatest ways one could ever thank for of promoting the rock-hounding community.

JIM

HAVING FUN - JUNIOR ACTIVITIES

FIRST MERIT BADGES AWARDED—AND OUR FIRST FRA ROCKHOUND

by Jim Bruce-Thompson, Junior Activities Chair

It gives me much pleasure to introduce you to two young people who hold distinct positions of honor in our new AFMS/FRA Merit Badge Program: Rhena A.V. South and Kristopher J. Helms of the Memphis Archeology & Geology Society (MAGS). Rhena and Kristopher are the very first juniors in the U.S. to earn FRA Merit Badges! And not just one badge; Kristopher has earned 4 and Rhena 6. Thus Rhena also becomes our first junior member to be awarded the FRA "Rockhound" badge! My congratulations to both Rhena and Kristopher. This month's column is dedicated to them.

Rhena, age 9, started picking up pretty rocks when she was 3 and enjoys sharing what she finds and learns. For instance, at a recent club meeting, she made toothpaste from minerals, displayed obsidian, and demonstrated a volcanic eruption. An active Junior Girl Scout, she earned 20 Girl Scout badges and 10 Girl Scout program patches in 2004 alone. She also earned a Lewis & Clark Patch, Earth Science Week Badge, and a Junior Arkansas Naturalist Badge. She won the 2004 Southeast Federation Junior Youth of the Year Award. She was also a finalist in the Earth Science Week Visual Arts Contest for October 2004. Rhena loves the outdoors, reading, animals, sci-fi movies, and playing on the PS2. In addition to her rock collection, she has a collection of 100 purses, including a number of unique antique purses. She likes to go on field trips, to museums, flea markets, antique stores, and the movies and keeps a journal of her varied activities.

Kristopher, age 12, is Rhena's step-brother, and he loves music as well as rocks. He's played the piano since he was 6 and the flute since age 9. He loves animals, especially his cat and dog, and also enjoys doing experiments and building things and always has a project going with one kit or another. He started collecting rocks when he was 8. He doesn't get to go on as many field trips as he would like, but still manages to find time for field trips, visits to museums, PS2 games, travel, and the movies. In addition to earning 4 FRA Merit Badges, he has earned a Lewis & Clark Patch and an Earth Science Week Badge, and joined Rhena in demonstrating how to make toothpaste and with a volcano demonstration to his fellow club members. He wrote his first article about the hobby on dolomite, which will appear in the February issue of the MAGS newsletter. He doesn't want to be called a "pebble pup" by Rhena anymore, so we hope to award him with 2 more FRA Merit Badges in order to see him graduate to official "Rockhound" very soon.

MAGS Youth Director Raynne Randolph and Assistant Youth Director Sherrido Helms have planned their activities for 2005 around the FRA Merit Badge Program and spent many hours working out a teaching guide to implement the program with the 10 to 15 kids who normally attend their monthly meetings. They've set the ambitious goal of having a third of their registred junior members as FRA "Rockhounds" by year's end and to get their older members more active as mentors to the younger kids. My thanks and congratulations to them. As you can see by their success with Rhena and Kristopher, they are well on their way, helping their club's kids learn while—as always—having fun.

SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION NEWS

There has been a challenge made by Keith Harmon of the South Central Federation to raise additional money for the second scholarship for 2005. As you have probably heard, the Directors in Syracuse voted to only fund one scholarship for each federation for 2005. For this "special fund" the money that will come in should have "unrestricted fund" anywhere on the letter or check. Please note this is separate from other donations when you forward your information on to me and Arlene Burkhalter, AFMS Scholarship Treasurer. (All money, restricted or unrestricted will count toward the final totals received from the clubs.

Articles in the AFMS Newsletter have already been published. The goal is $12,000. And the deadline for the goal is the Midwest/AFMS Shaw in St. Louis in August, 2005. At that time we will have a final live auction to raise the remainder of the funds. If the goal is reached, it will be announced at the end of the auction. In the mean time, anything you can do to help raise the money for the second scholarship would be greatly appreciated. Keith's challenge is one dollar per member. A number of clubs in the South Central have already pledged their support. Suggestions are: ask club to have a "silver shower" and empty their pockets of change. Challenge each of your clubs to come up with a unique way of raising the money. In 2001 at Arlington, TX, Izzy Burns asked the clubs throughout the US to help raise a "million pennies" This was accomplished, over $10,000, was raised in this manner.

Thanks for your continued support of the Scholarship Foundation. Any questions you might have, or any additional suggestions on raising money for the unrestricted fund would be appreciated. Contact me at: <beauholland@salmoninternet.com> and <shirlyleessen@msn.com>. (Please use both ad-dresses, as we travel.)

AFMS NEWSLETTER - MARCH, 2005
Exciting News of the 2005 AFMS Endowment Fund Raffle Prizes
by Joy Bourne, Endowment Fund Chair

We have received pledges for a total of twelve spectacular prizes to offer this year, and will have pictures of all of them to post on the AFMS website shortly. To whet your appetites for ticket purchases, here are some pictures and descriptions of five more of the new prizes.

1. Two more lovely opal pendants. The cabochons measure 8x15 mm and 10x14 mm in size, and both show red and green fiery sparkles throughout. The stones were in the inventory of the Endowment Fund, and were cut, finished and set by Shirley Leeson, CFMS, and Dee Holland, NFMS. Each is valued at $200.

2. A rare specimen of nine Eocene fossil bird tracks from Green River fm, Soldiers’ Summit, Utah. The size of plate is 9”x9.25.” Donated by Bill Klose, EFMLS/AFMS Safety Chairman from the Paleontological Research Institute of Ithaca, NY. Donation authorized by Dr. Warren Allmon, Director of the Institute. Approximate value is $150.

3. You read about the Pecos Diamond Necklace on page 1 of this Newsletter. Now see this fabulous Pecos Diamond Gem Tree: made of 327 double-terminated “Pecos Valley Diamonds” on the tree itself. The base is of alabaster and has 9 clusters of crystals on it. The tree was made by Howell Whiting’s daughter, Diane Weir of the Chaparral Rockhounds, and is worth approximately $85 to $100.

4. A beautiful butterfly carved from petrified wood, pedestal-mounted, and donated by AFMS President Bill Smith of NFMS. It is a Carmel and Cream color, 3 1/4 wide and just over 3 1/2 inches long. Bill says he has never seen this cream color before - and its value is $100 - $150.

As you are reading this article, the AFMS Endowment Fund Committee members are already out there selling tickets for the 2005 fund raising raffle. Contact your Regional Federation’s committee member to purchase tickets for yourself or to reserve a block of tickets for your club. Regional committee members are as follows:

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2023 Briarwood Circle
Fort Mill, SC 29735
(803) 547-5147

AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year

The Old Dominion Earth Science Society (ODESS) in Virginia proudly announces that Sandy Brenner has been selected as the club’s 2005 AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year. Sandy is the ODESS fossil field trip coordinator and has organized many trips for our club. He has obtained highly prized slots for excursions to the PCS Mine in Aurora, NC, which has resulted in the discovery of some large shark teeth and other marine fossils by our club members. Sandy has acquired an enviable collection of fossils himself, especially shark teeth. Through his personal research of the fossils he always has interesting observations to accompany his displays. In addition, he has worked with young members of the club to help them present programs based on their own collections. He has been a board member of ODESS in past years. In keeping with Sandy’s nature, he shares the credit of his accomplishments with mentors such as his mother, Phyllis Brenner, in the Paleontology Department of the Smithsonian Institution, and George Powell.

Submitted by Dave Dennis, editor
SAFETY FIRST - HEARING SAFETY
by Bill Kleese, AFMS Safety Chair

Hearing loss affects about 28 million people in the United States. About 10 million of these people received this damage as a result of exposure 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 or NIHL. Occupational noise exposure is the most common cause of NIHL, but non-occupational exposures, such as live recordings, 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 explosions, 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 permanent damage.

The best method for protecting ourselves from NIHL is to eliminate or reduce the 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 faced with potential exposure to noise.

Rock hounds are most commonly exposed to noise while in vehicles on the way to and from collecting sites. Some collecting sites contain industrial equipment 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 the protection of 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 or ear muffs.

Back in the shop, hammers and rotating equipment such as diamond saws, grinding wheels, rock hammers, rock trimmers, etc., contribute to the noise level along with everyday activities around the house such as music, television, household appliances, and power equipment (such as lawn mowers). Consider wearing ear plus or ear muffs when appropriate to prevent NIHL.

TRUTH AND SOME CONSEQUENCES
from Jon Spunaugle, AFMS Legislation & Conservation Chair

This article will undoubtedly be "pale" in comparison to its predecessors "Loud & Clear," authored by George Loud, Eastern Federation. George was a tireless and talented individual and an eloquent spokesperson for "rockhounding" nationwide. He will be greatly missed. We collectors owe him much gratitude for his 30 years of service. We can only hope he finds his way to a "early job retirement" soon and returns to apply his expertise and talent to the struggle to keep collecting lands open for educational and recreational purposes, including the hobby of "rockhounding".

Thanks, George, for all your time and effort.

In the last issue of Loud and Clear (AFMS Newsletter, November 2004), George spoke of a few promising developments. One in the courts, and one coming from the Administration (Executive Branch). In my efforts to follow developments, I also see a little "light" at the end of the tunnel coming from other sources.

Congress, in the just ending 108th Second Session, did very little in passing laws that remove lands from hobby collecting. Only one wilderness Bill was passed by Congress in the last two years. There were numerous wilderness Bills introduced into both Houses of Congress, but only one passed, Public Law 108-424 - The Lincoln County (Nevada) Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004. This act did create 768,274 acres of new wilderness in southern Nevada. The only other bills affecting public land that passed in the 108th Congress were small acreages of land transfers and land exchanges in various parts of the country. However, the "dead" Wilderness Bills will undoubtedly be reintroduced early in the 109th Congress.

Also significant is the fact that Congress did not pass the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act, which "died in committee" in the U.S. House of Representatives after an identical Bill had passed the U.S. Senate by unanimous voice vote. Our thanks go to Congressman Richard Pombo, Chair (R - California) and the other House Resources Committee members who prevented what had been called a "bad Bill" from advancing in the U.S. House. I am aware of numerous letters sent to Congress by "rockhounds" urging that this legislation not be adopted. Your letters obviously fill the very large footprints of George Loud that I can see behind me.

We'll talk again.

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT
from Jay Bourne, Endowment Fund Chair

We are pleased to report that the AFMS Endowment Fund has received several gifts from clubs and individuals recently, and we wish to recognize their gifts and thank them all for their generosity.

Contributions to the Endowment Fund were received from the following:
- Clear Lake Gem & Min Society, Houston, TX (SCFMS)
- Rollin Rock Club, Lubbock, TX (SCFMS)
- Fossils For Fun Society, Gold River, CA (CFMS)
- West Seattle Rock Club, Seattle, WA (NFMS)
- Wexley & Jo Ann Mohr, Lockeford, MD (FMLS)
- George and Karen Loud, Vienna VA, in memory of Bob Crotan (FMLS)
- Contributions to the Endowment Fund were received from the following:
- Clear Lake Gem & Min Society, Houston, TX (SCFMS)
- Rollin Rock Club, Lubbock, TX (SCFMS)
- Fossils For Fun Society, Gold River, CA (CFMS)
- West Seattle Rock Club, Seattle, WA (NFMS)
- Wexley & Jo Ann Mohr, Lockeford, MD (FMLS)
- George and Karen Loud, Vienna VA, in memory of Bob Crotan (FMLS)

Please note that we now have new procedures for processing donations to the Endowment Fund. Starting immediately, all contributions should be sent directly to Toby Cozens, AFMS Treasurer. Toby will inform me of the receipt of the gifts, and I will write the letters of thanks to the donors. This way, all funds will be deposited to the Foundation Fund accounts in a timely manner. However, if, in a senior moment, you send your gift directly to me, never fear, I will see that Toby receives your donation as soon as the mail can reach Seattle WA from Townsia PA.

Your gifts are greatly appreciated, and are accepted at any time, and for any reason e.g. memorials, celebrations, or just support for AFMS. Mark the memo line on the check for "AFMS Endowment Fund," and send them to Toby Cozens, AFMS Treasurer. You will receive a letter of thanks, and your contribution will be reported in the AFMS Newsletter. Contributions are also deductible as an IRS tax deduction. Thank you!!
REPORT ON A RECENT COURT DECISION  
by Jim Strain, California Federation

On December 30, 2004, Susan Illston, a U S District Court Judge, signed an order restricting OHV use in desert washes which had been open as a result of years of careful planning.

Based on litigation filed by the Center for Biological Diversity, et. al., the judge ruled that the Biological Opinion issued by the U S Fish & Wildlife Service was inadequate. She determined that off-road vehicle travel down some desert washes might harm desert tortoise habitat or disturb a tortoise.

Having served on the various planning commissions, committees, and groups for more than 30 years, there is no question that all safeguards possible have been put in place to assure protection for the tortoise while recognizing the needs of the public. This order ignores the needs of the public.

What does this decision mean to CFMS and its members? Primarily, it may deny access to some of our favorite collecting areas.

One area in particular is the Hauser-Geode Bed Area. Our Memorandum of Understanding with the Bureau of Land Management is still in place. We can access the geode beds down the existing designated routes of travel. If the designated route travels down a desert wash for a short distance, the route will remain open. If you are traveling down a designated route and turn off the route to travel down a wash, you may be in violation. The maximum fine could be $1,000.00 and a maximum jail time of 12 months.

Please remember that our agreement requires that one side of any hole we dig must be tapered to a 30∞ angle to allow any desert tortoise that might fall into a hole to walk out of the hole. This was to keep from having to refill the hole every time we dig one.

Another issue in the litigation was a request to use the courts to manage federal land. She denied the request. However, she did uphold a decision made, based on previous litigation, which will reduce the curb of travel to 100 feet.

Russel H. Trapnell 1908 - 2004

Russel H. Trapnell, AFMS President (1961-62) has passed away in Phoenix, Arizona. He was 96 years young.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, he attended Junior College and then went to work for General Motors spending 18 years in management for them. He then purchased a John Deere dealership in Gallatin, Missouri before selling it and moving to Phoenix, Arizona in 1949.

There he became a manufacturers representative traveling the southwest. At this time he also became interested in mineralogy and began amassing a rather substantial collection which he donated to a museum in Phoenix when he moved to a retirement community several years ago.

In 1957-58 he served as president of the Rocky Mt. Federation of Mineralogical Societies and in 1961-62 president of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Never one to sit still, he was still actively involved in events at the retirement center in Tempe where he lived until just a few days before his death.

He was preceded in death by his wife Katherine. His niece, Donna Trapnell survives him.

Contributions in Russel’s memory should be directed to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation % your regional Scholarship Foundation Coordinator.

Shirley Leeson
AFMS Historian

HELP PRESERVE HISTORY

from Shirley Leeson, AFMS Historian

As AFMS Historian this has been a sad few months. We lost Ken Zahn and Russ Trapnell, both former AFMS Past Presidents and more recently Bob Cranston, the cornerstones of our efforts in keeping collecting area open throughout the U.S.

I have asked in the past for biographies from the living Past Presidents. Some have come in -- Many have not. Those of you who haven’t gotten around to it, you are not immortal, sit down and write about yourself. Your interests like your hometown, your profession, your family, and especially how you got into the hobby we all love. If you only have notes, send them on and I’ll write it for you, with your approval on the final copy.

And for those of you in clubs who have hosted the AFMS/Federation combined shows, ask your older members if they have any memorabilia and if they would like a safe place for it. Their names will be mentioned on the donation. Many times when this happens it sparks thoughts of what someone else might have and can donated. We’ll be at the CFMS Show in Roseville, CA in June. We are also planning on attending the Rocky Mt Show in Colorado Springs also in June. If you can bring any items then rather than shipping them it would save all of us money. Dee will be in Salem, Oregon in August for the NFMS show and he can pick up any items you might want to bring. Well also be at the AFMS/Midwest Show in August in St. Louis. Please start your “spring housecleaning early” you never know what you might find.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

from Janet Smith, International Relations Chair

Our neighbor to the north, Canada, British Columbia to be exact, will be hosting a couple of Gem and Mineral shows this and next month. The 19th and 20th of March, in Vancouver, BC, the Hastings Rockhounds will host their annual show. Contact Bill Needoba at (604) 451-7701 for information. The show in Abbotsford, BC will be April 1-3, 2005. Bill and I have attended the Abbotsford Show, parking our 5th wheel at the fairgrounds, which is the show location. Contact person is David Williams (604) 870-1024.

If you plan to travel out of country and would like to know if there are any shows in the area you are visiting just give me a call or send an e-mail for more information.

REMEMBER:

Your Regional Federation Library receives several excellent slide and video programs from AFMS - at no charge - each year. Many of these programs are the winning entries in the annual Program Competition. Wouldn’t it be nice if a slide or video program YOU developed were included?

The deadline for the 2005 AFMS Program Competition is April 15 - outcome tax day. See the December AFMS Newsletter for details and give it a try.
REMEmBERING BOB CRANSTON

Last month we reported the passing of Bob Cranston. After the newsletter was forwarded to the printer, we received a number of reflections on Bob’s life, some of which we are printing in this issue. Bob’s contributions to our rockhound community were numerous and he will not soon be forgotten.

REMEMBERING BOB

On Sunday, January 3rd, we rockhounds and amateur earth scientists lost a great friend when Bob Cranston of Grand Junction, Colorado passed away. Bob had been the heart and soul (and workhorse) of the American Lands Access Association (ALAA). When Bob resigned from his Executive Secretary position several years ago for reasons of poor health, ALAA suffered a loss from which it is yet to recover.

I first met Bob when he came to Washington D.C. about ten years ago to represent ALAA at a meeting which brought together the various combatants in the fossil wars, called in an attempt to reach a consensus. While that consensus remains elusive, Bob’s visit was the start of a great friendship between the Cranstons (Bob and Shirley) and the Louds (George & Karen). Bob was our house guest during his visit and Karen and I took an immediately liking to him.

Bob thoroughly enjoyed meeting people and had enough charm for any two people. For several years he manned a booth for ALAA at Tucson and Denver and enjoyed the task immensely, greeting all females as “young lady,” with much favorable effect, especially on the older ladies.

One year in Denver Bob, Shirley and myself joined Bob Jones and his wife for a very enjoyable dinner, especially so for me because Bob and Shirley always laughed at my jokes.

At the AFMS annual meeting in Riverside, CA., Bob, Jan Spunaugle and myself drove together to Ketchum Idaho to meet with U.S. Forest Service Rangers in the hope that we could persuade them to ease restrictions on collecting in the Sawtooth National Forest. We were full of enthusiasm in those days, convinced that we could solve at least some of the field collecting problems faced by field collectors. Bob never lost that enthusiasm. I only wish that I could say the same for myself.

At one of the Tucson Shows where Bob & Shirley Cranston always had a table for ALAA out in the Hall, they said we should stop by Grand Junction on our way home. So we took them up on it. We just happened to be there on the night of one of the Grand Junction M & M meeting, which also had a pot luck dinner at that meeting. It was held at their club house, so it was one of our inspirations to strive for a Stillwater M & G clubhouse. (They are still trying to raise money for ours.) They had a house given to them, or some such thing. They had covered the outside walls with fantastic rocks and minerals. There was plenty of parking, and a pile of rocks out back where beginners, or whoever, could go pick out a rock or two from that pile.

Bob was a fun person to know. We are just sorry his heart finally gave out. He lasted several years longer than a lot of people in the same circumstances. He will be sorely missed.

Dan & Ruby Lingelbach
(Dan is a past President of the AFMS and Director of ALAA)

His total dedication to ALAA was unsurpassed by anyone of us who worked toward keeping public lands open to rockhounds. His contacts kept us all informed on all the many area of concern. He watched for any closures of public land and pending litigation from all sources that would infringe on our rights to collect on public land. His interpretation of governments term “multiple use of public land” was his cornerstone of concern. At earlier meetings of ALAA, everyone waited impatiently for Bob to speak to the concerns of the day. His knowledge of what was happening concerning public lands was invaluable.

His contributions to our rockhound community were numerous and he will not soon be forgotten.

Memorial contributions in Bob’s memory should be directed to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation and sent to your regional AFMS Scholarship Coordinator. If you wish the contribution to go towards the 2005 Scholarship Challenge, be sure to mark your check accordingly. All contributions will be used towards assisting graduate students in the earth sciences and will be credited towards the club that you designate.

AFMS NEWSLETTER - MARCH, 2005
In Search of Intarsia Artists

From Dennis Paul Batt

In a study begun several years ago, I have been able to identify many of the artists who have or are working in the unique lapidary form known as intarsia. I’ve created a website <www.americanastersofstone.com> which contains biographies and images of many of the artists. Please visit and take a look.

In addition, there are two how-to articles, one by Connie Grundke and the other by Meredith Jones. I will add How-to articles by William Grundke, Olive Calhoun, Charles Smart, Al & Myril Cook and several others over the next few months. Connie is also putting up the “Last Art” presentation and we will add a few more later.

After going over my database, I noticed that there are dozens and dozens of artists who have not yet found any work from and others who have been reluctant to send images in. Early next year I will do an exhaustive search through the Internet and find all that can be found. Several of the better known artists already have work there and I can use it for now. I will also try to track down some of the missing. There are a lot more ways to do this now than when we tried a few years ago.

Now I need your help in finding images and/or in locating artists that I don’t have. Your efforts in helping with this project will be much appreciated.

There are only a very few people left doing pictorial intarsias, but I am sure there are several new jewelry intarsia makers, whom I would be happy to add to the site. There may be several throughout the country who do the jewelry, since Tom & Kay McIvor have been writing articles and images on the subject. According to the Lapidary Journal quite regularly.

After checking out the website, please contact me with any new information you might have including pictures of the artist and/or his work. My e-mail address is <dennispaul55@adelphia.net>.

Regional Federation Shows

from Mary Trammell, AFMS Show Coordinator

California Federation
June 10-12, 2005 - Roseville, California
Eastern Federation
March 18-20, 2005 - Sayre, Pennsylvania
Midwest / AFMS
August 16-21, 2005 - St. Louis, Missouri
Northwest
August 5-7, 2005 - Albany, Oregon
Rocky Mountain
June 17-19, 2005 - Colorado Springs, CO
South Central
Date to be determined - Austin, Texas
Southeast
November 12-14 - Melbourne, Florida

2004 Darwin Awards

It’s hard to believe, but another year has passed. Once again, it’s time for the Darwin Award Nominees. The Darwin’s are awarded every year to the person who died in the most stupid manner, thereby removing themselves from the gene pool.

The 2004 nine nominees are:

Nominee #1: [San Jose Mercury News]:
An unidentified man, using a shotgun like a club to break a former girlfriend’s windshield, accidentally shot himself to death when the gun discharged, blowing a hole in his gut.

Nominee #2: [Kalamazoo Gazette]:
James Burns, 34, (a mechanic) of Alamo, MI, was killed in March as he was trying to repair what police describe as a “farm-type truck.” Burns got a friend to drive the truck away while Burns hung underneath so that he could ascertain the source of a troubling noise. Burns’ clothes caught on something, however, and the other man found Burns “wrapped in the drive shaft!”

Nominee #3: [Hickory Daily Record]:
Ken Charles Berger, 47, accidentally shot himself to death in December in Newton, NC. Awakening to the sound of a ringing telephone beside his bed, he reached for the phone but grabbed instead a Smith & Wesson 38 Special, which discharged when he drew it to his ear. (For whatever reason, residents of Southern states always seem to figure prominently among the Darwin nominees.)

Nominee #4: [UPI, Toronto]:
Police said a lawyer demonstrating the safety of windows in a downtown Toronto high-rise crashed through a pane with his shoulder and plunged 24 floors to his death. A police spokesman said Garry Hoy, 39, fell into the courtyard of the Toronto Dominion Bank Tower early Friday evening as he was explaining the strength of the building’s windows to visiting law students. Hoy previously had conducted demonstrations of window strength according to police reports. Peter Lawson, managing partner of the firm Holden Day Wilson, told the Darwin nominees. Toronto Sun newspaper that Hoy was “one of the best and brightest” members of the 200 man association. (Nice to see another Canadian province getting into the award.) The Maritimes always have been heavily involved.)

Nominee #5: [Bloomberg News Service]:
A terrible diet and a room with no ventilation are being blamed for the death of a man who was killed by his own gas emissions. There was no mark on his body, and an autopsy showed large amounts of methane gas in his system. His diet had consisted primarily of beans, beer and cabbage (and a couple of other things). It was just the right combination of foods. It appears that the man died in his sleep from breathing the poisonous cloud that was hanging over his bed. He had been outside or had his windows opened, it wouldn’t have been fatal. But the man was shut up in his nearly airtight bedroom. According to the article, “He was a big man with a huge capacity to breathe the poisonous cloud that was hanging over his bed. He had been outside or had his windows opened, it wouldn’t have been fatal. But the man was shut up in his nearly airtight bedroom. According to the article, “He was a big man with a huge capacity to breathe the poisonous cloud that was hanging over his bed."

Nominee #6: [The News of the Weird]:
Michael Anderson Godwin made News of the Weird posthumously. He had spent several years awaiting South Carolina’s electric chair on a murder conviction before having his sentence reduced to life in prison. While sitting on a metal toilet in his cell attempting to fix his small TV set, he bit into a wire and was electrocuted. (South Carolina inmates are always perennial favorites.)

Nominee #7: [The Indianapolis Star]:
A cigarette lighter may have triggered a fatal explosion in Dunkirk, IN. A Jay County man, using a cigarette lighter to check the barrel of a muzzle loader, was killed Monday night when the weapon discharged in his face, sheriff’s investigators said. Gregory David Pryor, 19, died in his parents’ rural Dunkirk home at about 11:30 PM. Investigators said Pryor was cleaning a 54-caliber muzzleloader that had not been firing properly. He was using the lighter to look into the barrel when the gunpowder ignited.

Nominee #8: [Reuters, Mississauga, Ontario]:
A man cleaning a bird feeder on the balcony of his condominium apartment in this Toronto suburb slipped and fell 23 stories to his death. Stefan Macko, 55, was “standing on a wheeled chair when the accident occurred,” said Inspector D’Arcy Honer of the Peel Regional Police. “It appears that the chair moved, and he went over the balcony,” Honer said. (Another Ontario entry ... wonder if people are moving there from the Maritime Provinces.)

Finally, THE WINNER!!!
[Arkansas Democrat Gazette]:
Two local men were injured when their pickup truck left the road and struck a tree near Cotton Patch on State Highway 38 early Monday. Woodruff County deputy Dovex Snyder reported the accident shortly after midnight Monday. Thornton Poole, 33, of Des Arc, and Billy Ray Wallis, 38, of Little Rock, were returning to Des Arc after a frog gigging trip. On an overcast Sunday night, Poole’s pickup truck headlights malfunctioned. The two men concluded that the headlight fuse on the older model truck had burned out. As a replacement fuse was not available, Wallis noticed that the 0.22 caliber bullet from his pistol fit perfectly into the fuse box next to the steering wheel column. Upon inserting the bullet the headlights again began to operate properly, and the two men proceeded on eastbound toward the White River Bridge. After traveling approximately 20 miles, and just before crossing the river, the bullet apparently overheated, discharged, and struck Poole in the testicles. The vehicle swerved sharply right, exiting the pavement, and striking a tree. Poole suffered only minor cuts and abrasions from the accident, but will require extensive surgery to repair the damage to his testicles, which will never operate as intended. Wallis sustained a broken clavicle and was treated and released. “Thank God we weren’t on that bridge when Thurston shut his testicles off, or we might both be dead,” stated Wallis. “I’ve been a trooper for 10 years in this part of the world, but this is the first for me. I can’t believe that these two would admit how this accident happened.”

(Darwin Award Official Rules, it can be argued that Poole and Wallis are indirectly, effectively remove himself from the gene pool).

I have already taken note, but not one of the candidates was a woman!

AFMS Newsletter - March, 2005