Recommended! Has Your Club Had a Good Physical?
by Bob Edington, EFMLS Past President. From EFMLS News, January, 2008

First of a three-part series.

Beginning in 2000, as second VP of the Eastern Federation, I became keenly aware of the fact that every year, clubs were dropping by the wayside. Why, I wondered? This at the same time others were doing OK and in many cases thriving.

In our federation, we have several clubs going over, or near 100 years. Again, how come? Within reason, it seems all seven federations and AFMS have a vested interest in doing things to help our clubs remain successful. As for me personally, and as a past president of EFMLS, I haven’t liked what I have seen with our Eastern club population sliding downhill with a loss of approximately 1 to 3 clubs per year for the past 20 years.

I do not have statistics for other federations, but from what I have observed at other regional and AFMS annual meetings, know others also have suffered many more losses than they would like. No federation can stay on good footing with that magnitude of losses forever. Plus it could ultimately affect even our healthy clubs. That said, I have made it a passion of mine to read and gather as much as I can on this, and more importantly, to try to learn why, by observing and talking with key members and officers of many clubs. The contact and exchange at regional shows and conventions plus chat time at Wildacres provided lots of invaluable input.

I will attempt in this series to spell out in simple terms what I learned, and offer specific things club officers and committee chairs together with members might work on to perhaps extend club life.

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Since our last AFMS Newsletter, some important things have happened.

We learned of the sudden passing of Cathy Gaber, our AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year after the December AFMS Newsletter went to print. It is a huge loss and we are still reeling from it. Complications of diabetes took her at a very young age. And we will never know her full potential, she was such a talented person. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Bruce, her husband and best friend. Because of this, I have asked Loretta Ogden, our CFMS Club Rockhound of the Year chair to step forward and take the AFMS position.

Second: The plan to get Mineral Heritage/Birthstone Stamps has had a huge boost! For those of you who have seen the February, 2008 Rock & Gem Magazine, on page 104 & 105, Our own Bob Jones has a wonderful article on our AFMS project.

YOUR CHALLENGE: First, if everyone one in a club throughout the U.S. would contact one school class and ask the help of the teacher and students, we could make this work in a nano-second! You can go to the AFMS Website: <www.amfed.org> select WHAT’S NEW – on that page there are three items on Commemorative Stamps: Birthstone Stamp Promotion Flyer, Tent Sign for Flyers: and FINALLY AND MOST IMPORTANT: TEACHER, STUDENT INFORMATION PAGE. This two page item can help you work with a teacher or teachers to give students the incentive to write to the Postal Service.

Third: contact your Senators and Congressman and ask for their help, especially those clubs in states where many of them are found:

- Arizona
- Colorado, California and Idaho
- Arkansas and Florida
- North Carolina and Montana
- Tennessee, Arkansas, Alabama and Louisiana
- Arizona
- Colorado, New Hampshire, Colorado, Texas, Utah
- Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah.

WRITE LETTERS YOURSELF. Please take the time at your club meeting to ask the members to write individual letters (a petition letter is only counted as one letter, no matter how many signatures – also mention your birthstone in your letter and that we are way behind other countries who have already issued gemstone stamps, but that ours would be spectacular) send to the Citizen’s Stamp Advisory Committee, Stamps Development, U.S. Postal Service, 1735 N. Lynn St. Room 5013, Arlington, VA 22209-6432. Remember, NOTHING HAPPENS, UNLESS YOU THE MEMBERS TAKE THE TIME TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN.

Now, while trying to find pictures of the various gemstones mentioned above I have come to realize that while I assumed that museums throughout the U.S. would have these gemstones, when I actually contacted many of them personally, there were few U.S. gemstones to be found. The one shining light was from Mark Wilson, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, PA. In a recently opened Hall of Gems, the Wertz Gallery, they have a display of the very gemstones we’re searching for, but they don’t have any pictures of the individual stones and aren’t willing to disturb the exhibit at this time. Even the GIA, who I thought would have everything in the world (sigh, exaggeration, but you know what I mean….) they had gemstones all right, but many in their collection didn’t give a location. The curator, Mark Mauther, told me that most cutters aren’t interested in the location but the stone itself. Here’s a thought—— how many facetors out in our rockhound community have stones that would fit into the above category? Would you be willing to loan your stone for a display? Contact me immediately and we’ll see if there is a national museum out there that would house the stones temporarily and take the pictures we need. I realize there are logistics on this, but it’s worth the effort.

Finally, I had the pleasure of visiting the Southeast Federation during their convention and show in Biloxi, MS in November. I was in awe of those people who put on the show and the convention meeting. It’s only been two short years since the devastation of Katrina. While you have heard of nothing but New Orleans, the people along a 100 mile stretch of Mississippi coast felt the wrath of a storm and wave surge that was unbelievable. What was once beautiful beaches and beach homes was nothing but destruction and you can still see piles of rubble everywhere. To come back from what they have endured for the second time (Carmine hit the same coastal area several years ago) is a test of courage. The meeting was productive and I am so proud to call the Southeast Federation a member of the AFMS. Their hospitality was wonderful and they made me feel a part of all of their events. Yes, I spoke at the meeting and didn’t realize until I received their December Newsletter that I had talked so much. (They have a great secretary Bert Ferguson, who dutifully took down every word). And lastly, I received a beautiful medal commemorating the meeting from Margaret Johnstone, president of the Harrison County Gem & Mineral Society who hosted the meetings. I will treasure it.

Till next month,
YOUR president

Shirley
Greetings for the New Year 2008
by Joy Bourne, President-Elect

I am writing this in late December from snowy New Hampshire, where we have been having a wonderful holiday reunion with four of our five children and their families. Only the snow-bound Minnesota kids were missing from this annual reunion – We span the continent from California to the New England coast, now – so it is a special time of reunion for us.

Our newly instituted AFMS committees are already planning and working on their agendas for 2008 to serve us in their special areas. Our Regional Bulletin Editors Advisory committees are well along in their 2008 planning, and those federations which have early-year conventions are already posting submission deadlines. The annual AFMS Endowment Fund drive is underway, and our committee members are just about ready to start meeting and greeting at their respective Regional Federation meetings. Your AFMS officers are reviewing procedures and making contacts on a regular basis with committee chairpersons and Regional Federation officers to see that everything runs smoothly. Our communications network is working beautifully. We are off to a good start for another productive year of service to the Rockhound community.

President Shirley and I are here to help all our new team leaders. If you have any special needs or concerns about your new role assignments, please feel free to contact either of us and we will do our best to answer your questions, or at least to direct you to someone who can help you solve any problems. Our goal is to keep the AFMS vital and growing in the field of conservation and responsible use of our national geological and mineralogical resources. We encourage your input and cooperation.

As I look ahead on the AFMS calendar, I note that the next Annual Meeting and convention will be held on Thursday, September 25, in SCFMS territory at Humble, Texas. That means that my biggest task – that of presenting a proposed budget for AFMS for 2009 – must be completed no later than August 20. I will need to have all committee requests for funding in my hands no later than August 15. Please mark your planning calendar accordingly, but we will remind each of you again as the deadline approaches.

Keep in touch! Joy.

National Rockhound & Lapidary Hall of Fame - Seeking Nominations

The National Rockhound and Lapidary Hall of Fame was founded in 1987 to recognize excellence in the earth sciences by inducting one or more persons each year in six categories: Education, Fossils, Lapidary, Metalcraft, Minerals, and Tribute (Deceased). At this time we have 125 inductees representing 44 states. All of the inductees are experts in their fields. Many of them have published several books and most of them have been active in community service.

Inductees include Washington Roebling, designer of the Brooklyn Bridge whose extensive mineral collection was donated to the Smithsonian, Paul DeSaultes, former curator at the Smithsonian, B. Jay Bowman, our current Publications Chair, June Culp Zeibner, the first lady of our hobby, and the most recent inductees – Roger Clark (Education), Ben Vrana (Fossils), Martin Hultquist, PhD (Lapidary), Paul Cory and Sharon Berch (Metalcraft), Steve Weinberger (Minerals) and Conrad Cone (Tribute). You can view the list of inductees by visiting the "Hall of Fame" website at <www.rockhoundhalloffame.org>/.

So how does someone "get into the Hall"? The process is a two-step process. First, and most important, the honoree must be nominated. To do this, choose a category: Education, Fossils, Lapidary, Metalcraft, Minerals or Tribute and send Maxine Wilson a one page (or less) nomination for your candidate. In your write-up, give the name and address of the person (or in the case of tribute, the name and address of a family member if you know it) along with a description of the nominee accomplishments. Obviously, we'd like you to make your nomination write-up as glowing as possible.

The deadline for nominations for 2008 is March 31. Nominations received after that date will be held until next year. You may make more than one nomination.

Shortly after March 31, all nominations will be mailed to the seven member Board of Consultants who will make their selections based on the write-ups received.

Send your nominations, by March 31 to:
Maxine Wilson
NRL Hall of Fame
23530 263rd Av
Murdur, SD 57559-6025
<rlranch@starband.net>

Purpose of the AFMS:
To promote popular interest and education in the various Earth Sciences, and in particular the subjects of Geology, Mineralogy, Paleontology, Lapidary and other related subjects, and to sponsor and provide means of coordinating the work and efforts of all persons and groups interested therein; to sponsor and encourage the formation and international development of Societies and Regional Federations and by and through such means to strive toward greater international good will and fellowship.

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AFMS Newsletter - February 2008
AFMS ENDOWMENT FUND NEWS

Old Father Time has done his thing bringing in a good old-fashioned blustery Winter for most of our territories this year. Hope you are managing to find a nice cozy place to sit to read this newsletter and take note of the exciting Endowment Fund news for 2008.

First off, let me express our thanks to some folks who have made special contributions to the Endowment Fund since our last report. We received another generous contribution from the Gem, Lapidary and Mineralogical Club of Montgomery County MD, this year, and another from Wendell and JoAnn Mohr, who are members of that club.

Contributions were also received from the Reno Gem & Mineral Society, the Rollin’ Rock Club and Che-Hanna Rock & Mineral Club. In addition, Gene Maggard, RMFMS treasurer, forwarded checks from two RMFMS clubs’ Stamp committees; the McPherson Gem & Mineral Club, and the Chaparral Rockhounds Gem And Mineral Club. Thank you to the many individuals, committees and clubs who continue to support the special programs which are funded by the interest from the Fund.

Our fearless Endowment Fund committee members are rested, refreshed and ready to go again coordinating the garnering of prizes and distribution of tickets for this year’s drawing! We have already received prizes or notification of seven prizes which will be featured in the 2008 drive. See the sneak-peek of the first two in this issue. We aim to have two prizes from each of the Regional Federations each year, for a total of 14 prizes. That means we have room for seven more.

If you are interested in donating a piece of jewelry, a special mineral specimen or fossil, an original carving, a faceted stone or other lapidary item, etc., we would be delighted to hear from you.

Contrary to some previously published accounts there was one rule change at Roswell, it concerned the wording of G-10. The new wording brings the rule more in line with the intent of the original authors of this rule. There are several other pages in the updates that correct errors and or omissions in past updates. Not all of the pages in these updates will be dated 2008, but will have the date that they should have been when they were originally changed or should have been changed. I believe there are 28 pages in this update and two are changed every year because of the changes in the AFMS rules committee each year, one is for changes in the rule, and the others are all corrections.

You can purchase a complete copy of the Uniform Rules and/or a copy of the 2008 Updates from your Regional Federation Supplies Chair or you can download the unofficial copy via the AFMS website.

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS JANUARY 25

WHAT DO YOU GET FOR YOUR 50 CENTS?

A question that is frequently heard is "What does the AFMS do for me?" The answer which I like best is "It gives me the opportunity to participate and compete." By doing so, Dorothy and I have received far more than the 50¢ we pay in annual dues (It was only 10¢ when we started). But, if you don’t participate, you can’t expect to receive much for your 50¢!

During the coming year, there are two programs which I would highly recommend for participation. One is the Tri-Federation Rockhound Rendezvous to Texas Springs, CA in May. This is a beautiful area for field trips. We have been there many times and always have found good material.

The second opportunity to participate is to put a case in competition. The AFMS and Regional Federations expend considerable effort and expense on exhibiting and in recent years participation has declined to an alarming level. I would especially recommend that more first time exhibitors enter in the "Novice" group. Some potential exhibitors might feel that the term "Novice" implies that their work is not good. This is not the case. What it does imply is that they are a novice at exhibiting and interpreting the rules.
When I inherited the Juniors Chair several years ago, I received a number of helpful files. Included within them were intriguing bits and pieces offering glimpses into the history of the AFMS Future Rockhounds of America program. For instance, from those bits and pieces I learned that it started around 1984 – that AFMS President Bill Cox designated a “Juniors Club” committee...that a contest was held whereby the design for the current FRA membership patch was created...and so forth. At the 2007 AFMS show, I heard from folks who were directly involved in starting FRA, folks like Howie Whitinger, with still more pieces of the story.

Again, though, the picture I have is all in small bits and pieces—a page in a file here, an anecdote told one evening there. This year, I’d like to stitch together those bits and pieces to assemble a whole quilt that provides the full picture and story of the AFMS/FRA program. If you have first-hand knowledge of the history of our juniors program, or can direct me to primary sources, please contact me. I’ll take information any way you can get it to me, whether by mail (7319 Eisenhower Street, Ventura, CA 93003), by phone (805-659-3577), or by email (<jbraceth@roadrunner.com>).

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It’s not too late to submit presentations illustrated with 35mm slides, or VHS tape. However digital “slides” or DVDs can offer definite advantages. So choose you’re your topic and format and get ready for the April 15, 2008 deadline!

Winning Programs are available to Clubs across the country via their Regional Libraries, where they typically enjoy a long life – they are loaned out on a regular basis over many years.

Clubs across the country are waiting... will you be a Winner?

“Guidelines and Rules” for 2008 Program Competition were published in the December 2007 Newsletter and are posted on the AFMS website (<www.amfed.org>) along with “Tips to Develop Programs”. If you want more information or have questions, contact: AFMS Program Competition c/o Marge Collins 3017 Niles-Buchanan Rd. Buchanan MI 49107 269-695-4313 or <margaret@qtm.net>

I’d like to assemble all those bits and pieces and put them all together on paper the full story of how our AFMS has been encouraging kids these many year—all the while, having fun!

WHO WILL BE THE WINNER? by Marge Collins, AFMS Program Competition Chair

Program Competition and throwing a party have one thing in common—invitations are broadcast – but how many accept, is always an uncertainty. Will you – or a fellow Club member accept the invitation, and possibly be a Winner? If a fellow Club member presented a great program to your Club, why not encourage them to participate in Program Competition? Yes, it takes extra effort to do so, but there are benefits and rewards! Just the satisfaction of completing such a project and knowing that you’re sharing – possibly inspiring – other Club members across the country gives a significant sense of accomplishment. Another consideration is the cash award of $100 - $200 to help defray production expenses. And winners are sometimes invited to present their program live to other Clubs or at Shows.

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REMINDER

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS JANUARY 25
CATHERINE J. GABER

The American and Eastern Federations lost one of their team members at the end of November with the untimely passing of Cathy Gaber at the age of 57.

Cathy was born in Alexandria, VA and lived most of her life in the Washington, DC area. Her “formal” education was in History and Anthropology and she was employed for about 20 years in the computer field where she did programing, systems analysis and database administration. A constant learner, Cathy subsequently took classes in a variety of crafts - Precious Metal Clay and chain making to name just two, and, after she and husband Bruce became interested in minerals, pursued classes in mineralogy as well, eventually turning that interest into a stint as a volunteer in the Smithsonian Institution’s minerals division.

Shortly after becoming interested in minerals, Cathy and her husband Bruce joined a local club where they soon began what was to become a life-long involvement in leadership positions becoming president or vice president of two. She was soon nominated for an EFMLS position, rising through the ranks until, in 1997, she became president. Her involvement with EFMLS did not cease with the end of her term however as she volunteered to be the Eastern chair for the AFMS Rockhound of the Year Committee, a position that subsequently led her to also become the AFMS Chair for the committee.

Cathy soon became “Sharing Time” Coordinator for the Federation workshops at Wildacres and was often called upon to teach classes - mineral identification, Precious Metal Clay, and chain making - and most recently served as the EFMLS Wildacres Speaker Coordinator. She also participated in some very unique, and often hilarious skills during the Wildacres Fun Night programs. Who could ever forget her clever, off-the-wall and sometimes wicked sense of humor?

She was also involved in the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium for which she invited individuals to set up displays and, with Bruce, collected auction donations from the various dealers present.

Believing that those involved with the Wildacres Workshop should be recognized, in 1997 she inaugurated what has become an annual award - The Wildacres Appreciation Award.

Cathy also pursued her interest in writing - and she did it exceptionally well. Her contributions to such publications as “Stone, Metal & Glass”, Rocks & Minerals, as well as newsletters of the three clubs that she belonged to were extremely well researched and well written.

A special fund, “The Catherine J. Gaber Endowment for Education in Mineralogy”, is being established in her memory. Contributions may be mailed to A.E. Seamon Mineral Museum, 1400 Townsend Dr; Houghton, MI 49931-1295. Please mark your contribution for the “Catherine J. Gaber Endowment”.

She is survived by her husband Bruce, her mother, sister and brother.

Cathy was an outgoing person - a friend to many - and an amazingly talented individual. Her death of complications from diabetes has robbed us all of a wonderful talent. It was a privilege to know her and an honor to be considered her friend.

Carolyn Weinberger

NEW IRS FILING REQUIREMENT

The Internal Revenue Service has expanded the requirement to file the new electronic annual return to tax exempt organizations whose gross receipts are normally less than $5,000.00

We have societies in the Federations that have always had gross receipts less than $5,000.00. These societies are not required to apply for tax exemption, but are treated as exempt. The new provision requires these societies to also file the new electronic annual return even if they never filed for exemption. It does not require them to file for exemption.

It is highly likely these societies will not receive the return information from the Service. The burden falls to the society to obtain the information and file the return. The IRS Exempt Organizations informed me they will be using the EIN (employer Identification number) data base for the filings. The EIN will be needed when filing.

What type of exemption do these societies have? It is my opinion that it depends on their Articles of Incorporation (corporations) or Constitution (unincorporated) (organizing documents). The wording of these documents and the actual activities of an organization will determine which section of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) applies. It is my belief that all active mineral and gem societies are eligible for exemption under IRC Section 501(c)(3) (charitable and educational). What language needs to be included in these organizing documents to be treated as a 501(c)(3)?

Purposes that are educational in nature with the public invited to all educational activities.

Statement that the organization will not aid or oppose candidates for public office.

Statement that in the event of dissolution remaining assets will go to another 501(c)(3) organization.

Statement that the organization will not to a substantial degree attempt to influence legislation.

The actual wording for the statements can be found in IRS Publication 557. If the current organizing document does not include these statements, I recommend filing a Certificate of Amendment (corporations) or revising the Constitution (unincorporated).

If your society wants to verify its status with the IRS, the Exempt Organizations can be reached at 877-829-5500.

I will answer any questions if you email me at <zeileitz@directcon.net>
AFMS Club Rockhounds of the Year
from Loretta Ogden, AFMS Chair

First, an introduction...

My name is Loretta Ogden and I am your new Rockhound of the Year chairperson. My husband Don Ogden and I have belonged to North Orange County Gem & Mineral Society for about 15 years now. We are both active with the CFMS. He is the original Webmaster for the Federation website <cfmsinc.org>. I have served as Chairperson for Bulletin Aids and what we call Education Through Sharing (the CFMS equivalent of the AFMS ACROY Program).

I am a silversmith, lapidary and bead stringer along with collecting face rocks, pretty rocks, ugly rocks, strange rocks and a variety of other rocks. Feel free to send any samples along with your regional nominations. I would appreciate that they be sent to me E-mail at <donogden@aol.com> with Loretta/AFMS in the subject.

I’m looking forward to hearing from you all. Now here are the Rockhounds of the Year for this month.

California Federation

The Peninsula Gem & Geology Society is proud to nominate Colleen Mc-Gann as our 2007 CFMS Club Education Through Sharing, Rockhound of the Year. She has been an extraordinary member of our club nearly 2 decades, giving an enormous amount of personal time and knowledge for the benefit of our club, our members, our Federation and our hobby in general. She has chaired all of the major offices, has been President for a number of years when needed, and has backed up everyone in any club function. Colleen has prepared several display cases, both for educational purposes and for competition, with which she has won both awards in club and Federation shows. She has presented programs both for our club and for neighboring clubs, has been a mainstay on field trips and at shows, and shares her knowledge of rocks, minerals and the locations for their collection. Colleen has served on various committees and offices of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies, including President of the Federation in 2006. Colleen McGann has our deepest respect and gratitude. She deserves to be recognized in the greater rockhound community.

Sutter Buttes Gem & Mineral Society wish to present Ed Eden as our Education Through Sharing Nominee. He joined us in 1994 and has held several offices and show chairman. He sets up many interesting programs and works tirelessly at the show. He is active with the Boy Scouts, Library, Cancer Society and his church. He does rock identification and supplies specimens for our Scout Day. He is a very valuable member and we would like to recognize him for his many years of services.

Ed and Corinne actively supports All phases of the Pasadena Lapidary Clubs activities. Ed is in charge of visiting schools to teach youngsters the basics of collecting and identifying rocks and leaves samples for them to study. With Corinne they demonstrate several forms of bead, wire work, and chain making using hand made wood and nail fixtures at the monthly workshops. Ed is one of the backbones of the annual show, receiving and return of the club cases and rental tables, scheduling setup and layout for the display cases and tables. They demonstrate both days of the show. Ed is display person and reports on the items members bring in to share at the meetings. They are both active in planning and attending the clubs regular field trips.

submitted by Kevin Birtsbaum
CFMS Federation Director

Adele “Sammy” Florida has been involved ever since she joined the Gem Carvers Guild of America 15 years ago. Her main interest is working with young children at the Los Angeles and Orange County Fairs and at local gem and mineral shows. She provides soapstone “blanks” of hearts and arrowheads for the youngsters to finish shaping with files while visiting her demo table. In spite of her intense work schedule she has been the faithful editor and publisher of the clubs newsletter for many years. Sammy volunteers her home for the annual summer swim and potluck party workshops.

submitted by Vern Cliffe
CFMS Alt Federation director

Eastern Federation

Team player, friendly, good-natured and really likeable, Bob Davidson is the Southern Maryland Rock & Mineral Club’s 2007 Rockhound of the Year. He willingly accepts responsibilities and has been our president, newsletter editor and field trips chair. He started the club website for free and remains our current webmaster. Bob teaches monthly cabochon-making classes, and coordinates and leads long distance field trips to North Carolina and Utah/Nevada. He is truly a club asset.

submitted by Dave Lines

On behalf of the Gem, Lapidary & Mineral Society of Montgomery County, MD, Inc. we nominate GEORGE DURLAND as our Rockhound of the Year 2007. George has served as Vice-president and President and is currently on our Board of Directors as Immediate past-president. He was responsible for doing the paper work and leg work so our Society could obtain 501(c)(3) status. He is now serving as publicity chair for our annual show and is a major contributor to the Fluorescent exhibit as well as entering several other cases for exhibit at our shows. He has given talks at our meetings and at those of other area clubs as well as to schools in the area. Currently he also helps judge and choose recipients of our society’s awards for Earth Science exhibits at the Montgomery Area Science Fairs for junior and senior high school students. He has been called upon to do many jobs in the Society and we are grateful that he always accepts the call!

submitted by Nancy & Dave Ballard

My nomination for Rockhound of the Year 2007 is L. Diann Wortham of the Patuxent Lapidary Guild (PLG), Maryland, where she has served as President for the last two years. Since she has been in our Guild, Diann has contributed many costly pieces of equipment and great excitement to our workshop. Growing up in New Mexico she learned about rocks and retail in her father’s store. She believes in the Each One Teach One motto as she teaches PMC techniques, wire wrapping, and general smithing to members who greatly enjoy her enthusiasm and carefree nature. Diann is a valued member of our organization and continues to amaze us with her knowledge of the lapidary arts and her energy. Her Wild Acres experience and sharing of what she learned there has been a bonus for the membership. This honor would be a great gift to her and to the PLG.

submitted by Diane Thompson
Patuxent Lapidary Guild

I would like to recommend Merrill Dickinson as “Rockhound of the Year”. Being a member of the Pennsylvania Earth Science Association (PESA) for many years I have come to know this extraor- dinary person, and feel that I have made a great friend. Merrill was an excellent field trip chairperson, keeping us safe and helping us find treasures by showing us what to look for in the many quarries we visited over the years. Merrill volunteered to help during the club’s Mineralfest Shows at Macungie. Merrill also started an instructional program for many boy scout troops with the help of members of the PESA organization. He volunteered to lead field trips for the Eastern Federation’s Wildacres Sessions, and usually performs a skit for the “fun night” activity there. He now holds the position of supplies chair for the Federation.

submitted by Michael Kessler
member, PESA, EFMLS Regional VP

Hilda and Werner Wagener have been in the South Bay Lapidary Society for a number of years and have always had a table at our show with a display of Petrified Wood for sale plus a case of their best samples. They give each child a piece of petrified wood at the show. Helga and Werner have gone to many schools to give talks to the children, also to other Clubs. They have studied extensively to learn as much as possible and also talked to other Dealers. They give lectures in their home for children and show them their back yard so the children can see what large pieces of Petrified Wood looks like in the rough. We are proud to nominate these exceptional members as our Rockhounds of the Year.

submitted by Omer Goeden
Federation Director

submitted by Inez Berg
CFMS Federation Director

submitted by Dave Lines

submitted by Vern Cliffe
CFMS Alt Federation director

submitted by Don Ogden, AFMS Chair
Tri-Federation Rockhound Rendezvous and Field Trip
by Dick Pankey, Inter-Regional Field Trip Chair

Sign-ups for the Tri-Federation Rockhound Rendezvous and Field Trip are starting to come in. Some clubs are coming as a group and will continue on to other collecting areas after the Rendezvous. I hope that you and your club are making plans to attend what promises to be a unique and special rockhounding experience. This trip is a repeat of our 2003 Rendezvous. We are going to a well-known collecting area that has some pretty spectacular material. The weather should be just right—springtime, the hills are still green and the wildflowers bloom. We are relying on the bulletin editors and field trip chairmen to help get the word out about this unique adventure. The two-page Field Trip fler is available on the AFMS, CFMS, NFMS and RMFMS web pages. This fler has all the details about the trip, directions to our campsite and other useful information.

There were two activities mentioned in the fler that I would like to explain in more detail. On Friday and Saturday afternoons we will conduct our Tailgate Displays. We will have rockhounds from all over the western United States that I am sure have collected some unique and interesting material from their home area. Bring along some specimens to show and share at the tailgate displays. This will also be a good time to conduct the “map exchange”. Map exchanges are easy—to get a map you have to give a map. Before you leave home prepare a good, detailed map of a good, unique or little known collecting area that you are familiar with. The map should be a detailed hand or computer drawn map with accurate mileages, GPS coordinates are very desirable, and be sure to note collecting site details and campsites where appropriate. Bring along as many maps as you would like to receive. I plan to bring 100 copies of my map. I am sure there will be a lot of informal exchanges of collecting sites, GPS info, and sharing of great places to go and see.

A highlight of the 2003 trip was the great Dutch oven dinner prepared for us by Bill Roach from the BLM. And he will do it again! He will put on our Friday evening dinner. A not to be missed experience. I have also scheduled two speakers from the BLM to give talks on the history and lore of this area and the California Trail.

This trip is open to members and guests of all the Federations. Everyone who agrees to adhere to the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies Code of Ethics, abide by the direction of the field trip leaders, and practice safe rockhounding is welcome to attend.

Please notify me or one of the other Federation leaders if you plan to attend, and no later than May 16th, if you plan to attend: e-mail (or call) if you have questions or need more information. Don’t wait—do it now. This will be a great opportunity for rockhounds from all over the west (and all of the Federations of the AFMS) to meet one another, to share stories, and information about collecting in their home areas. Be sure to bring material from your favorite collecting sites to show and share. Come join us for a great Tri-Federation Rendezvous of collecting, fun and fellowship.

Dick Parks
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Yonis Lone Eagle
Rocky Mountain Federation
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505-860-2455

Richard Pankey
California Federation
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925-439-7509

Murphy’s Lesser Known Laws
forwarded by B. Jay Bowman

1. Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
2. Change is inevitable, except from a vending machine.
3. Those who live by the sword get shot by those who don’t.
4. Nothing is foolproof to a sufficiently talented fool.
5. The 50-50-90 rule: Anytime you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there’s a 90% probability you’ll get it wrong.
6. If you lined up all the cars in the world end to end, someone would be stupid enough to try to pass them, five or six at a time, on a hill, in the fog.
7. The things that come to those who wait will be the scraggly junk left by those who got there first.
8. The shin bone is a device for finding furniture in a dark room.
9. A fine is a tax for doing wrong. A tax is a fine for doing well.
10. When you go into court, you are putting yourself into the hands of 12 people who weren’t smart enough to get out of jury duty.

Upcoming Federation Conventions
from Bob Livingston, AFMS Show Coordinator

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>California Federation</th>
<th>Eastern Federation</th>
<th>Midwest Federation</th>
<th>Northwest Federation</th>
<th>Rocky Mountain Federation</th>
<th>South Central Federation</th>
<th>Southeast Federation</th>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>June 27-29&lt;br&gt;Ontario, CA</td>
<td>Feb. 23-24&lt;br&gt;Lincoln, NE</td>
<td>June 20-22&lt;br&gt;Ontario, OR</td>
<td>Oct. 31 - Nov. 2&lt;br&gt;Tulsa, OK</td>
<td>AFMS&lt;br&gt;Sept. 25-28&lt;br&gt;Humble, TX</td>
<td>AFMS&lt;br&gt;Aug. 5 - 10&lt;br&gt;Riverside, CA</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>May 16-17&lt;br&gt;Parks, OH</td>
<td>AFMS&lt;br&gt;July 31 - Aug. 2&lt;br&gt;Billings MT</td>
<td>AFMS&lt;br&gt;May 16-17&lt;br&gt;Parks, OH</td>
<td>AFMS&lt;br&gt;Aug. 5 - 10&lt;br&gt;Riverside, CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
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the top and tells us what to do. We don't tell you what
And then the Region puts the American Federation at
you've ever thought about it. It's the clubs that do it. And
is what you get. I've never been evasive. Everything's
whatever way I can. I'm not a politician. What you see
work is for everybody to participate…and I'm asking for
the Southeast Federation and the American Federation
and you're part of us. The only way that we can make
who was a Bulletin Editor. Someone came up to
me this morning and she said, 'I'd like you to have
our help. My theme is communication, and I want all
here that often. I'm glad I came to say hello to you all. I hope
a one year history of your club. When you participate
you get a wonderful sense of what your club has done
and what it could be doing as well. After the competition
when you bring the entry back, you put it in your library
for your historian. So, all of these things work for you.
But you've got to participate and work with us in order
to do this.
I could talk a lot more but I don't think you want me
to. I just want to say that I'm glad to be here. I've come a
long way, so there isn't any reason why you can't come
and visit us in California or Idaho.
The American Federation Show is going to be in
Houston this coming year in September. It's in the
A.F.M.S. Newsletter. And by the way, does every single
club receive three A.F.M.S. Newsletters? You're entitled
to. But the person who puts out the newsletter can't get
them to you if you don't give her the information on who
to send that to.
So the following year, it's going to be in Billings,
Montana…a marvelous area, and I have invited the
canadian Federation to come down and join us...and I
hope you will too. In Billings, I believe it's in August. It will
be in the Newsletter. If you look in the A.F.M.S. Newslet-
ter, currently there's a little box down at the bottom and
it tells you all of the Federation shows for the various
years. As soon as the Regional Federation putting on
the show has the dates, they are to submit them so that
we know and we can put them on our calendar.
I'd like to say one more thing. The Gem and Mineral
magazines that I grew up with, sort of, when I was get-
ting into the hobby…there were a lot of them. We only
have one left - Rock & Gem. They contacted me not too
long ago and they said, 'We're starting a new column,
and it is a question and answer column. People write in
and ask questions on how to do things. Will you get a
group of people put together that will answer the ques-
tions?' And I said, 'Absolutely!' So I contacted people all
over the United States, and I said, you know facet-
 ing, you know carving, you know safety. I asked Don
Monroe if he would be available if there were rockhound
safe questions that needed to be answered. And I
didn't get a single person that said, "No, I don't want to
participate." They all said, "Yes." And when I submitted
all of the names and emails to the editor, she was just
absolutely blown away. She said, "I had no idea there
was that much out there."
Rock & Gem has another challenge for us. They
are offering a prize for a 'how-to' article. The contest
will go on until December, 2008 of next year. So for
all of you that are capable of writing a 'how-to' article
on your favorite subject, please submit it to them. You
might win… I think it's something like $500.00 in lapidary
equipment. It's worth it!
I thank you all for allowing me to talk to you. It's nice
to put faces and names together. It's not that I can get down
here that often. I'm glad I came to say hello to you all. I hope
that you will stop and say whatever is on your mind to me
after the meeting. And if there is anything that I can do to
help, I'm here. My theme is communication, and I want all
of the Federations to feel like they're a part of the national
organization. I'm not sure that everybody has always felt
that way. And I want to make a difference. Someone once
told me that to be successful, you have to make the first
step yourself. I've stepped forward. Now I'd like to have
you join me, please.
Here is the listing of the people who have agreed to serve as AFMS Chairs for 2006-7. Please feel free to contact these people or the person in your regional federation who serves on the as well - if you need information or have ideas to share with them.

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Bulletin Editor Hall of Fame
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Bylaws Revisory
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Central Office
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Commemorative Stamp
Wendell Mohr - Chair
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Conservation and Legislation
John Wright
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Endowment Fund
Joy Bourne
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Education-All American
John Washburn
<jwashburn2@msn.com>

Financial Investment

Historian
Shirley Leeson
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<beauholland@salmoninternet.com>

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Judges Training Seminar
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<shirleyleeson@msn.com>

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Nominating
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Parliamentarian
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Program Competition
Marge Collins
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Public Relations

AFMS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

AFMS Newsletter - February 2008
Dear Friends at the AMFS,

My name is William Amidon. I am a graduate student at Caltech where I was the recipient of the AFMS scholarship award in 2006, and am now in my second year of funding by this award. I wanted to take a moment and thank the AFMS for making this scholarship available, and to update the officers and members on how I have been using the money.

My area of research involves the production of “cosmogenic” 3He in common accessory minerals such as zircon, apatite, titanite, ilmenite and magnetite. Cosmogenic 3He is produced in these minerals by atmospheric neutrons which induce nuclear spallation reactions on elements within the minerals. By understanding the production rates and production systematics of 3He in these minerals, we hope to develop a methodology for cheaper and easier cosmogenic dating of surfaces and sediments in the landscape. Because 3He is a stable isotope, we hope that this research may someday lead to the ability to understand exposure and erosion histories of ancient surfaces and sediments as well. This project is interesting from a mineralogical perspective because production and retention of 3He is highly dependent on composition and structure of mineral phases, requiring detailed analysis of each mineral phase that we work with.

The funds awarded from the AFMS have allowed me to develop several side projects related to this research. One of the side projects I have been working on is an experiment to determine how production of cosmogenic 3He changes with elevation. We have reason to believe that the production of 3He increases more rapidly with elevation than other cosmogenic isotopes such as 10Be, 26Al, and 21Ne. If we can conclusively demonstrate this effect, paired measurements of 3He and other cosmogenic isotopes in mineral phases may provide a new approach to paleo-altimetry. To document this effect, I designed an experiment in which I created “targets” containing a variety of mineral phases, and mounted them on ridge tops between 8000 and 14000 ft in the White Mountains. I plan to collect these targets in three or four years, and measure the accumulated 3He. I hope to use the remainder of my funds to design an experiment in which synthetic minerals are subjected to neutron and/or proton bombardment to better understand the energy dependence of 3He production in these minerals. Funds from the AFMS make it possible for me to initiate projects such as these. These dollars are particularly well spent at a place like Caltech, where the projects will also benefit greatly from access to the many analytical facilities here at Caltech.

Please extend my warmest thanks to all of the members of the AFMS who made this scholarship possible. I realize that the size of this award is quite large for an organization like AFMS, and I assure you that it has had a correspondingly large impact on my ability to develop my own projects here at Caltech. I look forward to producing some interesting results which I can share with you, and to acknowledging your great generosity in some public presentation of the work.

Best wishes, and thank you.

William Amidon

For the past 15 to 20 years warnings about the probability that legislation similar to the current Paleontological Resources Preservation Act now being considered by Congress was expected. The warnings have for the most part been ignored or arbitrarily dismissed and not passed on to the majority of members. It seems to me that this prevailing mind set is “that someone else is supposed to take care of these things by problems”. I know at the club level, legislative matters are so uninteresting and boring; after all there are so many much more important priorities like refreshments, field trips, programs, the annual shows, etc., that just have to be addressed. Most of our area federation and club editors don’t even consider articles about pending legislation newsworthy enough to be included in their publications, not even when they are in a pinch for filler material. At best the legislative articles in the AFMS Newsletters and ALAA bulletins receive only a cursory glance most of the time.

So legislative matters are boring, well, while it’s doubts, let me see if I can generate a little interest.

Legislation newsworthy enough to be included in the AFMS Newsletters and ALAA bulletins have received some pretty tough penalties. Pick up one of the millions of shark's teeth on federal lands and you could go to jail, pay a hefty fine, lose your vehicle and anything else you have with you including your underwear. There are no requirements for the enforcement officials to issue a citation to an expert in paleontology or even be familiar with different kinds of rocks. The burden of proof is going to be on you, which means attorney’s fees, other related costs, and the possibility of having your vehicle impounded for a prolonged period.

Another special added proviso contained in the bill is the “grandfather clause” in Section 7(d), which exempts owners of vertebrate fossils from penalty if the fossils were lawfully obtained prior to the date the proposed legislation is enacted. Now that is downright deceitful, except for one small legal technicality that I mentioned in the previous paragraph called “burden of proof”. If you own any vertebrate fossils, be sure that you have absolute proof that you acquired them legally. Even with undeniable proof be careful, because the bill also contains a provision for rewarding snitches. Owning fossils of any kind and particularly vertebrate fossils may in the future result in a lot of heartburn and possibly a lot of expense.

Fossils are a substantial part of the businesses associated with our hobby. If this law is enacted, many of the rock shops around the country are expected to go out of business. Think about the dealers at your gem and mineral shows; while exclusive fossil dealers are few, most of the dealers offer some fossils for sale. They can only sell so much of the other items in their inventory, so how do you think they are going to make up for the slack? A lot of the exhibits at our shows are fossils. If enacted, this bill is going to affect you even if you don’t have an interest in fossils.

These are the facts as I see them and have explained them to you in the above paragraphs. Who loses if this proposed legislation is passed? We do and many more like us. Okay – what are we going to do about it? Write letters to our congressional representatives or sit back and do nothing? If we do nothing, when the hammer falls so to speak, we will have no justification or reason to cry about, because it will be our own fault. Think about it!