



AFMS Newsletter
 Carolyn Weinberger, Editor
 PO Box 302
 Glyndon, MD 21071-0302

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A.F.M.S. Newsletter

Volume 65, Number 4 – March, 2012
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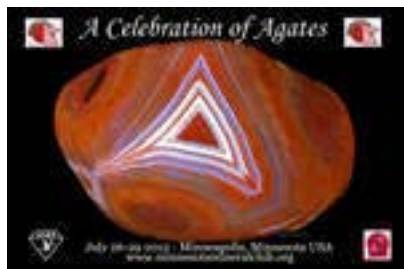
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES
 SERVING SEVEN REGIONAL FEDERATIONS

A CELEBRATION OF AGATES

by Sandy Fuller, Convention Chair

Agates, agates, agates! Almost every area has some type of local agate; a distinctly banded chalcedony quartz.

This July, agate enthusiasts and novices are gathering at A Celebration of Agates, an international symposium and show in Minnetonka MN. The event is being held in conjunction with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies annual convention.



Festivities begin on Thursday July 26 in the Lindbergh Center at Hopkins High School with a day of seminars. Those attending the AFMS meetings scheduled for the same day can still attend a half-day of presentations. Register by April 1 for the early bird discount.

The facility is not your typical high school. When the Hopkins school district upgraded their facilities, they created state of the art space for major community events. Seminars, meetings, the banquet and the show are all scheduled at the same location. The only off-site event is the Uniform Rules Committee meeting on Wednesday afternoon at the nearby Marriot Minneapolis West Hotel.

A Celebration of Agates is a unique event, featuring some of the top agate collectors from around the world. Here is a chance to personally meet some of the collectors profiled in Agates II by Johann Zenz.

Thursday's keynote speaker Dr. Jens Götze keeps abreast with the latest research and is considered the world's foremost authority on agate formation and genesis. Meanwhile, his personal collection of worldwide agates continues to grow.

Those who are able to come early are also invited to attend Moose Lake Agate Days on July 21-22. You won't want to miss the agate scramble in downtown on Saturday, the two day show or the opportunity to collect at area gravel pits. The fireman's steak dinner fundraiser and Art in the Park round out this community wide event.

Host Minnesota Mineral Club has invited other clubs in the state to sponsor field trips during Monday through Wednesday, July 23-25. Details will be posted as they become available,

Marriot is providing host accommodations at the Marriot West Hotel (just one mile from the show site) and Spring Hill Suites (two miles). Both facilities are \$79 a night per room and event rates will be honored from July 20-30. Remember to mention "A Celebration of Agates" to qualify for this special rate.

Event registration forms and hospitality information are available online at <minnesotamineralclub.org/2012show.htm>. Inquiries can be submitted through the website or sent to 2012agates@gmail.com. Want to talk to a live person? Call Sandy at 651-459-0343 or Phil at 763-717-1641.

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AFMS Endowment Drawing News

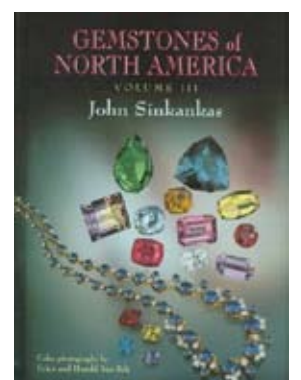
by Pamela Hecht, Chair

Help Help Help!!!! Time is running out for receiving your donations for the 2012 AFMS Endowment Fund Drawing to be held during "A Celebration of Agates" show and convention in Minnetonka, MN this July.

Please, please, please...help support this endeavor. Proceeds from the drawing are used to fund a number of AFMS programs that you your club benefit from. Donations should be sent to me - my address is on page 3 and 7 of this issue.

I have received one new prize since the last issue of the newsletter was published. Here are the details: Prize #11: "Gemstones of North America, Volume III" by John Sinkankas. Sinkankas' name is synonymous with the world of gemology and mineralogy. Donated by Steve Hecht, the volume has an estimated retail value of \$65. (MWF).

Tickets can be purchased from your regional Endowment Fund rep. See the contact info for them on page 3.



THE AFMS

PROUDLY SERVING
SEVEN REGIONAL
FEDERATIONS



OFFICERS:



President

Lauren Williams
957 E Elva St
Idaho Falls, ID 83401-2164
208-529-6978
<slharuir@msn.com>



President-Elect

Don Monroe
<donmonroe@windstream.net>



1st Vice President

Richard Jaeger
<rjgrsci@aol.com>



2nd Vice President

C.J. Quitariano
<ciq_62@yahoo.com>



3rd Vice President

Carolyn Weinberger
<editor@amfed.org>



4th Vice President

Sue Dale Miller
<sdalemiller@bcglobal.net>



5th Vice President

Sandy Fuller
<MWFtreas@Rock-Biz.biz>

Secretary

Anne Cook
<secretary@amfed.org>

Treasurer

Pat LaRue
<bplarue@earthlink.net>

FROM THE TOP!

by Lauren Williams, President

As you read this newsletter it is early March the third month of the year 2012. While the last part of July seems like a ways off it is only four months until the MWF/AFMS Show and Convention in Minnetonka, Minnesota. It is not too early to make your show registration and motel reservations now. Don't forget your own regional Federation show and convention. Without the regional federations there is no AFMS. For you AFMS Committee people start thinking about and making that report that goes into the AFMS Agenda.

I like to deal directly with the hotel/motel that is the show headquarters, that way I do not have to worry about a toll free 800 number telling me that there are no rooms available. When you make your reservation make sure that you mention that you are with the 'Celebration of Agates' show and convention in order to get the room rate.

For the AFMS and Midwest Federations this year it is the "A Celebration of Agates", hosted by the Minnesota Mineral Club. The hotels are: Marriott Minneapolis West 952-545-2857 or Springhill Suites by Marriott 952-738-7300. Now if you will excuse me I have to find a registration form and make a phone call to Minneapolis, Minnesota.

How are you coming along with your competitive display case?

Lauren



AFMS Judges Training

by Dee Holland, Chair

Reminder -- Registration Deadline -- April 16, 2012

Now that both the holiday seas and Tucson Shows are over, use the money you have left over to take advantage of a unique offer up close and personal.



The Judges Training Workshop will be held in at the Holiday Inn, Sparks, NV from May 10 - 13. A registration form for the session can be obtained by downloading the November, 2011 AFMS Newsletter from <www.amfed.org>. Just click the "Newsletter" tab.

The hotel is offering a rate of \$75 per night (including taxes), but you must call them directly at 1-775-358-6900 to obtain this rate. In addition, there is a \$20 registration fee for the class, but this includes lunch at the hotel on Friday and Saturday.

You will need to have a copy of the 2012 AFMS Uniform Rules book. You can purchase a copy from your regional federations Supplies Chair or download a copy via the AFMS website <www.amfed.org/rules/rules.htm>. We're delighted that Jay Bowman, who has taught the class for the Eastern Federation and for the AFMS Judges Training sessions in the past will be joining us as our instructor. Jay is truly an extraordinary instructor who will help you to understand and interpret the various rules that are used by judges. Once you have a better handle on what judges look for, you will be able to enter a far better exhibit case of your own at your club or regional federation show.

Classes will be held at the Holiday Inn, Sparks on Thursday evening (May 10th), Friday, May 11th and Saturday, May 12th with actual practice judging of cases at the Reno gem & Mineral Societies show on Sunday morning May 13th. We will probably be finished the class around lunch time on Sunday.

This year the training session is being held in Reno - convenient for those in the CFMS and NFMS. Next year the plan is to move it to another region of the country to make the class more accessible to more people. Regardless of where you live, do take advantage of the class. You'll have an enjoyable weekend.

If you have any questions, please contact me at <beauholland@centurytel.net>.

I look forward to seeing you in Reno this coming May.

Watching the Weather

by Owen Martin, AFMS Safety Chair

As is my usual preference I like to write about issues that I observe while in the field. This past Christmas I had an opportunity to hunt with one of my friends who is affectionately known as Creek Crawler. Our target hunting site was the North Sulfur River in NE Texas. It is a popular locale, but can be dangerous if the water level comes up.



On this particular day it was raining in Dallas where we had our "base camp" "my in-laws" house. It was also storming out to the east near Paris, TX. However, using the weather websites we determined that our section of river was not getting any rain. Thus we made the decision to take a risk.

In this instance the rain skirted our region all day and we ended up having a very productive hunt. In the process we discovered that our "new phones" also allowed us to monitor the weather radar while we were in the river bed.

The moral of the story is that you have technology available to you today that can help you make better decisions while out in the field. In the past there have been many occasions when I have called my wife and asked her to check the radar on the weather channel. I still do it sometimes since all my hunting spots are not in areas with data coverage however those uncovered areas shrink a little more every day. Technology can be used to help us monitor traffic, communicate with other hunting buddies when they disappear around the bend or over a hill or simply to watch the weather.

ENDOWMENT SALES

continued from page 1

Tickets for the drawing are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Remember that this year there are two different drawings being held. Drawing #1 is an opportunity to win one of the 4 fabulous pieces of lapidary equipment that have been donated to us by Inland Lapidary. If you're interested in possibly winning one of these items, you need to put the number of the item on the front of the ticket you purchase. These will be deposited in a separate bin for each piece of equipment and only those who mark their tickets will be eligible to win.

If you do not wish to possibly win one of the lapidary equipment items, your tickets will be placed in a separate bin and winners will be drawn for these.

To purchase your tickets, send your check, payable to "AFMS Endowment" and a SASE to your regional salesperson as noted below:

California Federation:

Colleen McGann
PO Box 224; Santa Clara, CA 95052
<Colleen.mcgann@hds.com>

Eastern Federation

Carolyn Weinberger
PO Box 302; Glyndon, MD 21071-0302
<editor@amfed.org>

Midwest Federation:

J.C. Moore
25235 No. State Route 97, Cuba, IL 61427
<JCMoore3rd@gmail.com>

Northwest Federation:

Chris Blickfeldt
236 Tollgate Rd; Boise, ID 82716
<grumpies@q.com>

Rocky Mountain Federation:

Richard Jaeger
3515 E 88th St; Tulsa, OK 74137-2602
<RjgrSci@aol.com>

The South Central and Southeast Federations have not yet appointed a sales person. If you are in those federations, you can purchase your tickets directly from me at 25393 Oak St; Calumet, MI 49913. This is the same address to use when sending me your donations.

For additional info about the drawing, contact your regional salesperson or me at <steverox@up.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.

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

Address corrections and changes
Subscription Information
Distribution Questions

Each Regional Federation Club is entitled to receive three (3) copies of the AFMS Newsletter.

These are sent to the President, Editor and Federation Director or Secretary.

Subscriptions are \$4.50 per year
Remit payment to the
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Checks should be made payable to
"AFMS"

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ALL CHANGES AND QUESTIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO:

AFMS CENTRAL OFFICE
STEVE WEINBERGER
PO Box 302
GLYNDON, MD 21071-0302
410-833-7926
<central_office@amfed.org>

CONTENT - LETTERS

EDITORIAL COMMENTS - SUBMISSIONS
ANY COMMUNICATION CONCERNING THE CONTENT OR FORMAT OF THE NEWSLETTER SHOULD BE

SENT TO THE EDITOR:

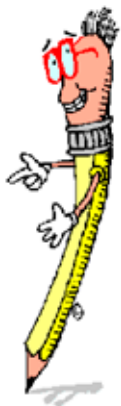
CAROLYN WEINBERGER
PO Box 302
GLYNDON, MD 21071-0302
410-833-7926
<editor@amfed.org>

DEADLINE IS THE 1ST OF EACH MONTH PRECEDING PUBLICATION (I.E. APRIL 1 FOR THE MAY ISSUE)

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QUICK TIPS FOR EDITORS

by Linda Jaeger, AFMS Bulletin Editors Advisory Chair



If you have a question (or suggestion) about editing or writing or the bulletin contest or something related, send it to me by email: <LjgrAlg@aol.com> or at home address: 3515 E. 88th St., Tulsa, OK 74137. If I cannot find an answer, we'll publish the question and ask readers for their answers.

(Clip art above from Discovery Channel School Image Gallery, © 2003. Permission to use for educational, not for sale publications granted.)

Here Comes the Judge!

Judge, (noun) – a person qualified to give an opinion or decide on the relative worth of anything; one who by expertness of knowledge is qualified to decide on the relative merit of things

Judge, (verb) – to determine the winner of a contest

So, are you a judge? Do you have background in teaching English or writing? Do you edit or write professionally? Have you won AFMS awards for writing or editing? Do you have background in or work in the field of earth science? Can you be impartial?

Yes? Then we need you!

Perks for judges:

You get to read the best of the best, whether you're looking at articles, poems, or bulletins.

You get to encourage writers and editors.

You get to learn what is going on in other areas of the USA within our hobby.

You get to read about some of the most interesting stuff ever!

You get to make someone feel worthwhile, noticed, and thrilled.

And you get to volunteer!



Who needs you?

Your regional federation Bulletin Editors Advisory Chairman always needs judges to help decide what entries from their regional contest will be forwarded to the AFMS contest (top 3 in each category). The AFMS Bulletin Editors Advisory Chairman (that's me!) needs you, too!

Interested and qualified?

Want to get your feet wet? Contact me (Linda Jaeger) at the email or snail mail above.

And to all of you who are and have been judges, a bouquet of your favorite flowers in your favorite rocks. THANK YOU!

A CELEBRATION OF AGATES EVENT SCHEDULE

Wednesday, July 25:

AFMS Uniform Rules Meeting

Thursday, July 26:

8 am - 5 pm: Agate Seminars
You must pre-register to attend

9:00 am - AFMS Annual Meeting
AFMS Scholarship Meeting immediately after
AFMS Luncheon (all welcome to attend)

Friday, July 27:

9:00 am: MWF State Directors Meeting
10:00 am: MWF Executive Committee Meeting
MWF Lunch (all welcome to attend)
2:30 pm: ALAA Meeting
Noon - 7 pm: Show open

Saturday, July 28:

10:00 am: MWF Council of Delegates Meeting
Informal Sessions for Clubs:
MWF Lunch (all welcome to attend)
2:00 pm: Starting and Using a Club Website
3:00 pm: Facebook & Wiki Communications
4:00 pm: Including Youth in Your Club
6:00 pm: Awards Banquet
9 - 5 pm: Show Open

Sunday, July 29:

8:30 am: Breakfast with the Editors and Webmasters
10 am - 4 pm: Show Opens



UPCOMING REGIONAL FEDERATION CONVENTIONS

by Bob Livingston, AFMS Show Coordinator

Here are the dates and locations for the Regional Federation Conventions that I've received to date. Please notify me as soon as your federation determines its convention dates so that we can avoid having conflicts in the schedule. For 2012 we are still waiting to hear from the Southeast Federation.



	California Federation	Eastern Federation	Midwest Federation	Northwest Federation	Rocky Mountain Federation	South Central Federation	Southeast Federation
2012	July 13-15 Riverside, CA	Sept. 15-16 Harrisburg, PA	AFMS July 26 - 29 Minnetonka MN	May 18 - 20 Kennewick, WA	March 16-18 Albuquerque, NM	Aug. 25-26 Jasper, TX	
2013	Ventura, CA	April 5 - 7 Long Island, NY	April 6 - 7 Lincoln, NE	August 16-18 Butte, MT			AFMS Sept. 20-22 Jacksonville, FL
2014			Oct. 18 - 19 Des Moines, IA	August 15-17 Hermiston, OR	AFMS		
2015						AFMS Austin, TX	

AFMS ROCKHOUNDS OF THE YEAR

from Evelyn Cataldo, AFMS Chair

Greetings AFMS Members,



I am proud to have been selected to chair the AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year Committee.

The first order of business is to complete the submissions for 2011.

Midwest Federation:

James Yarber
500 Earth Sciences Club



James is Club Vice President, Co-Chairman of the annual club show, Program and Field Trip Chairman of the 500 Earth Sciences Club based in central Indiana. James encourages member participation in monthly programs, involves other rock clubs in joint field trips and makes presentations to school classes and Scout troops. As a retired science teacher, he has the ability to relate to novice collectors and professionals alike; conveying his enthusiasm for the earth sciences.

submitted by Brian Mercer

Northwest Federation:

Stephen Petkovsek
Mt Hood Rock Club



The Mt. Hood Club honors Stephen Petkovsek as their Rockhound of the Year. Stephen joined in 2000 and has served as Vice-President and President. He has been in charge of the club's competitive society case and the lapidary shop. He works at the Club and Portland Regional shows, often as silent auction chairman. For several years, he has assembled a case of rock related items to be used at the club show as a raffle item. His interests are making cabs and spheres, polishing flats, silversmithing and knapping. Many of his projects are donated to the club, Portland Regional and to the Children's Hospital in Portland. Each year, he volunteers a week of his time to teach silversmithing at the Federation's Rockhound Retreat.

submitted by the Mt. Hood Rock Club

And now for 2012

Eastern Federation:

Lance Shope
Penobscot Mineral and Lapidary Club



Lance is a charter member of the club and was President for the first three years. He initiated the club's annual Show and was Chairperson for the first six years. Lance organized and runs the club's lapidary room at the clubhouse. There he teaches and instructs members interested in learning the skills and intricacies needed to produce a polished stone from a piece of "rough" material. Lance also acts as field trip coordinator for Agate and Jasper Beaches.

submitted by Ruth Siebert, Secretary

Southeast Federation:

Iris Conner
Rockingham Mineral Club



Mrs. Iris Conner is the only charter member left in the Rockingham Mineral Club in Reidsville, North Carolina. She has been the Secretary/Treasurer since 1974. We are a small club and would not be here if it was not for Ms. Iris. I have been in the Club for 15 years and Ms. Iris is like a mom to me. We do the sluice for 25 schools, Scouts and Churches. Ms. Iris is always there and without her we would not exist. We all love her very much. She is 88 years old! Ms. Iris is a very special person and deserves the recognition.

submitted by Ed English, President

Just a reminder that all clubs may select not only an adult member (or husband and wife) each year to receive the honor of being "AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year" but can also nominate a junior member for "AFMS Junior Club Rockhound of the Year".

I eagerly look forward to receiving your nominations for 2012.

SCRIBE NEWS

by Cheri George, SCRIBE Member

Do you have trouble filling the last page of your newsletter with an interesting article?

Do you think you might like to change the format of your newsletter – from typing across the page to typing in 2 or 3 columns but you don't know what it would look like?

Are you having problems with pictures or converting your newsletter to PDF so you can send it by e-mail to your members and save some money on postage and printing?

Do you feel you are paddling up stream, against the current, and nobody in your club really or truly understands what it takes to put the newsletter together each month?

If you answered YES to any of the above questions – then I I have a deal for YOU !

Join your fellow editors by becoming a member of SCRIBE – Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors. There are presently approximately 160 members, but we're always looking to enlarge the group to include YOU. Dues for the year are only \$6.00 (US Funds). For this modest fee you receive four electronic newsletters per year plus a DVD that's chock full of newsletters, articles of interest, clip art and everything an editor needs to know! Everything on the DVD can be copied and used in your own club bulletin!

The old saying "misery loves company" certainly can apply to bulletin editors as we've all "been there-done that." Only another editor understands the frustration of having to wait for the president, secretary, committee chairmen etc. to send in reports so you can type pages. There is no better reward, after mailing your newsletter, than to receive a pat on the back from another editor for a well written article, the new approach you tried in the format or your success with pictures. Editors understand – most club members don't. If you want more information about SCRIBE check out the Scribe Web Site <scribe.rbnet.net>.



I look forward to seeing your name among the list of members in SCRIBE.



HOT OFF THE PRESS!

from Ye Olde Ed

AFMS International Relations Chair Bob Jones is no stranger to the world of travelling and writing. As Sr. Consulting Editor for Rock & Gem Magazine, his contributions are always eagerly awaited and often the first thing read by subscribers.

Now, he's taken some of his magazine articles, expanded them, added numerous anecdotes and

photographs and produced "The Frugal Collector, Volume I", a fabulous new book.

Chapters include information about a variety of minerals that most mineral lovers would want in their own collection with an eye towards keeping acquisitions affordable for all.

Bob's easy writing style, selection of photographs and comments, make this volume a "must have" for any home library.

The volume is available from Rock & Gem, the official magazine of the AFMS.



WEST NILE VIRUS

by Mark Nelson, Emergency Medical Technician, Pasadena Lapidary Society

West Nile Virus (WNV) is a concern for rock collectors during field trips and knowledge of the causes and prevention can help us all enjoy our hobby more fully! WNV is a mosquito-borne disease that was originally found in Africa. In 1999, it was detected in the eastern United States. Since then the virus has spread throughout the United States and is well established in most states WNV is spread by the bite of a mosquito that becomes a carrier ("vector") when it feeds on infected birds or squirrels. Infected mosquitoes can then spread WNV to humans and other animals when they bite.

California's first case of human infection for 2011 occurred in Santa Barbara County in July. Infection with WNV can produce serious, life threatening, illness and should be taken seriously. While most people (80%) who are infected with WNV will not show any symptoms, the other 20% will display symptoms. In its mildest form, these symptoms can include fever, headache, body ache, nausea, vomiting, and sometimes swollen lymph glands or a skin rash on the chest, stomach and back. Symptoms generally last for just a few days, although even previously healthy people have been sick for several weeks.

Residents are cautioned to take precautions now to avoid mosquito bites and eliminate standing water sources to break the mosquito life cycle. The CDC and the California Department of Public Health recommend the "4 D's":

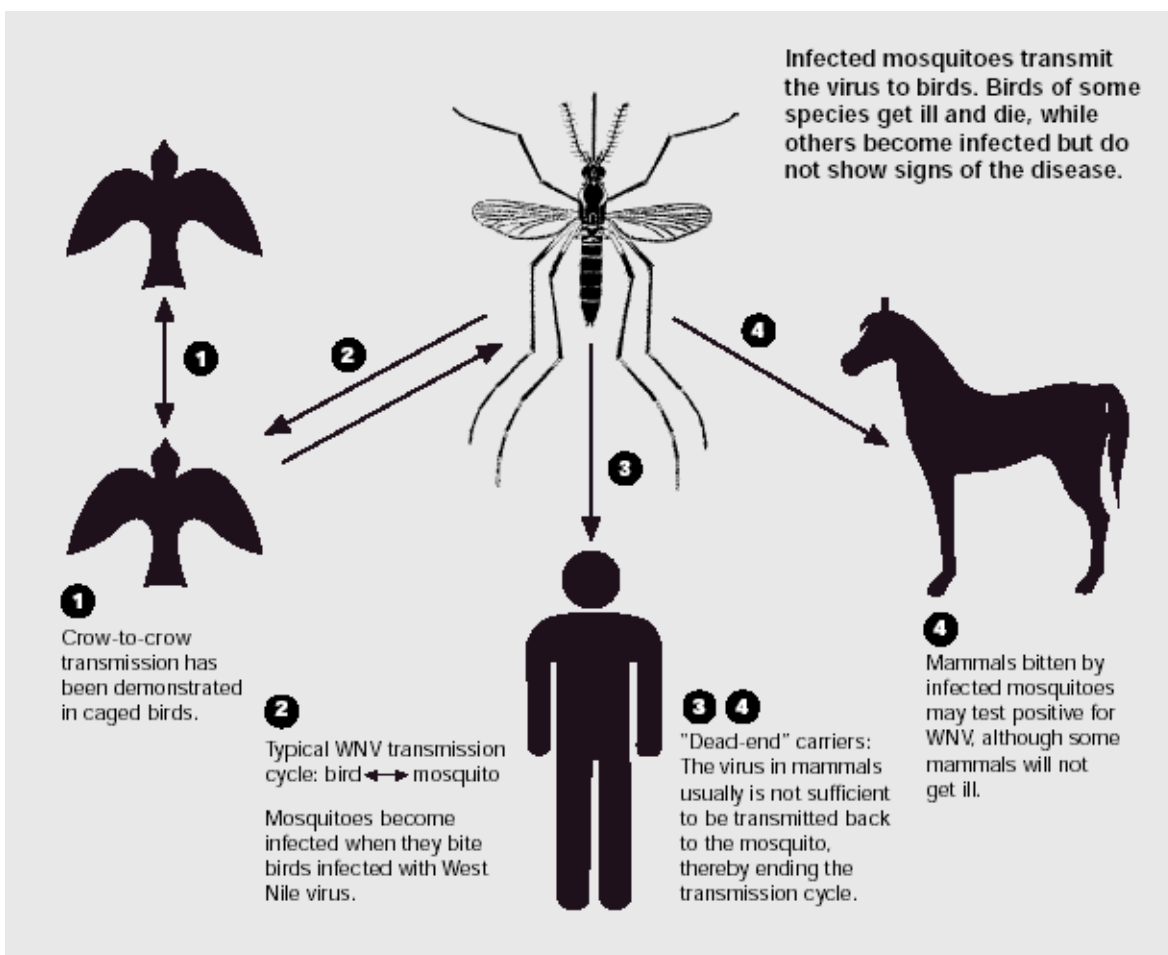
- DEET - Apply insect repellent containing DEET, picaradin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535 (according to label instructions) on exposed skin when you go outdoors. Repellants keep the mosquitoes from biting you. DEET can be used safely on infants and children 2 months of age and older.

- DRESS - Wear clothing that reduces the risk of skin exposure to mosquito bites. Wear long-sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors. Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing, so spraying clothes with repellent will give extra protection. Don't apply repellents containing permethrin directly to skin. Do not spray repellent on the skin under your clothing.

- DAWN AND DUSK - Mosquitoes bite in the early morning and evening so it is important to wear repellent at this time. Make sure that your doors and windows have tight-fitting screens to keep out mosquitoes. Repair or replace screens with tears or holes.

- DRAIN - Mosquitoes lay their eggs on standing water. Eliminate all sources of standing water on your property, including flower pots, old car tires, rain gutters and pet bowls. If you have a pond, use mosquito fish (available from your local mosquito and vector control agency) or commercially available products to eliminate mosquito larvae.

You can help track down the West Nile Virus by reporting all dead birds and squirrels, which often die as a result of the WNV infection. To find the WNV reporting agency for your state call the U.S. Center for Disease Control, which was the source of the information contained in this article, at (800) CDC-INFO (232-4636) or go online to www.cdc.gov/westnile.



AFMS CODE OF ETHICS

- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations of rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind - fences, signs, buildings.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material - matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and Will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule", will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public "image" of rockhounds everywhere.



AFMS COMMITTEES: 2010 – 2011

Here is the listing of the people who have agreed to serve as Committee Chairs for 2011 – 12. Please feel free to contact these people if you need information, have questions or would like to share ideas with them.

All American Club

John Washburn
<jrwashburn3 at att.net>

AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year

Evelyn Cataldo
<cataldoevelyn at yahoo.com>

AFMS Newsletter

Carolyn Weinberger
<editor at amfed.org>

Boundaries

Marion Roberts
<myroberts at bigvalley.net>

Bulletin Editor Hall of Fame

Carolyn Weinberger
<editor at amfed.org>

Bulletin Editors Advisory

Linda Jaeger
<ljgralg at aol.com>

Bylaws Revisory

Steve Weinberger
<central_office at amfed.org>

Central Office Administrator

Steve Weinberger
<central_office at amfed.org>

Commemorative Stamps

Wendell Mohr
<wmohr at erols.com>

Conservation and Legislation

John Martin
<afms-conservation at antelecom.net>

Endowment Fund

Pam Hecht
<steverox at up.net>

Financial Investment

Lauren Williams
<president at amfed.org>

Historian

Shirley Leeson
<shirleyleeson at cox.net>

International Relations

Bob Jones
<jonesb52 at gmail.com>

Inter-Regional Field Trip

Doug True
<dtruefossils at yahoo.com>

Judges Training Seminar

Dee Holland
<beauholland at centurytel.net>

Junior Programs

Jim Brace-Thompson
<jbraceth at roadrunner.com>

Long Range Planning

Bob Miller
<kanbrock at att.net>

Name Badges

Frank Mullaney
<rockyfiv at aol.com>

Nominating

Bob Miller
<kanbrock at att.net>

Parliamentarian

Dee Holland
<beauholland at ceenturytel.net>

Past President's Advisory

Bob Miller
<kanbrock at att.net>

Photography

Steve Weinberger
<central_office at amfed.org>

Program Competition

Marge Collins
<margaret at qtm.net>

Publications

Ron Carman
<rcarman at centurytel.net>

Safety

Owen Martin
<owenmartin at yahoo.com>

Show Consultant

Bob Livingston
<gemguy at verizon.net>

Uniform Rules

Anne Cook
<secretary at amfed.org>

URC Eligibility Files

Anne Cook
<secretary at amfed.org>

Ways and Means

Bob Miller
<kanbrock at att.net>

Website/Webmaster

Marty Hart
<webmaster at amfed.org>

Web Site Contest

Cheri George
<lizardwoman3 at yahoo.com>

AFMS Scholarship Foundation

Dee Holland, President
(see Judges Training)
Lauren Williams, Vice President
Ruth Bailey, Secretary
Jon Spunaugle, Treasurer

A Rousing Success!

by Shirley Leeson, Vice President, American Lands Access Association

ALAA Meeting with BLM at Quartzsite a Rousing Success



The American Lands Access Association (ALAA) scheduled a meeting with representatives from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) at Quartzsite, AZ on January 20, 2012. Planning for this event was no small matter. If you have even been to Quartzsite you know SPACE is at a premium and needs to be booked at least a year in advance. With that said, I proceeded with a program of importance for the event. I contacted the Yuma, AZ. BLM Field Office. Rockhounds? Who, What? But once we got that sorted out it was clear sailing, they said they would be there and I told them I'd fill the room....

Even I was amazed as over 180 rockhounds, Off-Highway Vehicle groups and members of the general public filled the room. Of interest was the soon to be released BLM La Posa Travel Management Plan.

What's that, you ask? And how will it effect me? Glad you asked...the long and the short of it is this. The BLM personnel have been in the desert around Quartzsite for the last two years mapping all desert roads, trails and washes that some off road people (that's us) use to get from Point A to Point B. Now that it's finished the BLM will be asking the public (that's you and me) to COMMENT. Here comes the tricky part. Most rockhounds will turn off at this point, hoping for "someone else" to do the dirty work.

It's not as daunting as it looks. The BLM for the Quartzsite area wants to reduce the conflict between motorized (that's rockhounds and all off-road people) with non-motorized people, passive recreation, livestock management, and commercial purposes (that in some cases are solar and wind plants on public lands – but that's another issue)

Routes are managed to reduce impacts to cultural, historical, and natural resources. (this is government speak for endangered critters, plants, and Indian relics, etc. which have first priority).

As mandated by Presidential Order, Use of Off-Road Vehicles on the Public Lands, designated routes:

“shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, or other resources of the public lands.

shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats.

shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to ensure the capability of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors.

shall not be located in officially designated

Wilderness areas.” (Executive order 11644 and 11989)

What is now being asked is: EVALUATION The Evaluation process creates four (4) management alternatives:

- A. No Action
- B. Resource Protection
- C. Proposed
- D. Access

After PUBLIC COMMENT, and input, BLM develops an Environmental Assessment through the National Environmental Policy Act. (watch for NEPA mentions in your local papers or on public land – BLM or Forestry Websites.) A second public comment period allows for public review of the NEPA results. Finally after all the comments are taken into consideration the BLM provides a Decision Record, officially designating all routes as open, limited or closed. (we thank the BLM Yuma office for this official description of this plan)

The meeting held in Quartzsite, had 185 registered people in attendance and blew away the BLM

representatives. This was a clear message that we are interested, involved and a group, both rockhounds and off-road people to be reckoned with.

YOU can get involved if you are a winter visitor to Quartzsite and know the desert roads, trails and washes. YOU must go to <aamlands.org> then Pending Legislation on the left hand side and then click on Arizona. YOU must submit a compelling and detailed request for those roads, etc. that you want left open. This must be strong enough to counter special interests who want the road closed for any number of various and sundry reasons. (see above under cultural, historic and natural resources) ALL COMMENTS MUST BE IN WRITING and sent either via post office or email. they will accept nothing less.

Remember: "If we do nothing, we will get nothing!"

If you need more information, I'll be happy to help in any way I can. <shirleyleeson@cox.net>



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Protecting the Public Lands for the Public

Please enroll me as a member of the ALAA! Annual membership fee is \$25.00
Annual membership fee for clubs is \$50.00

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Ruth Bailey
2857 Addison Pl
Santa Clara, CA 95051-1705

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