AFMS Competitive Exhibit Deadline Extension

from Jennifer Haley

The CFMS Rules Committee has decided to extend the Competitive Exhibit Entry deadline to May 15th. Usually everyone waits until the last two weeks to send in their forms, which gives all of us the heebie-jeebies who are organizing this part of the show. So far we have not received any entries other than from the CFMS.

You Have to Play to Win!

by Carolyn Weinberger

The 2017 AFMS Endowment Drawing winners will be announced during the Awards Banquet during the AFMS/CFMS Convention in Ventura, California on June 10th. The prizes this year are delish...and I'm sure would be wonderful additions for your home collection should you win one. Should you not be present in Ventura, your prize will be mailed to you.

In order to win however, you have to play by purchasing one or more tickets for the drawing. Tickets remain at $5 each or 5 tickets for $20 and can be purchased from your regional federation representative listed below by sending them your check (payable to AFMS Endowment Fund) along with your name and address and a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Deadline for them to receive your request by mail is May 31.

Monies collected are invested in the Endowment Fund principal and the interest generated from the fund is used to help pay for a variety of AFMS projects including the very popular Junior Rockhounds badges. We’re sure you’ll want to help!

Regional Federation Representatives:
California - Colleen McGann, PO Box 224; Santa Clara, CA 95052
Eastern - Carolyn Weinberger, PO Box 302; Glyndon, MD 21071-0302
Midwest - J.C. and Donna Moore, 225235 N State Rt 97; Cuba, IL 61427
Northwest - Judi Allison, 1701 Nw 11th St; Hermiston, OR 97838
Rocky Mountain - DeLane Cox, 8152 Spanker Ridge Dr; Bentonville, AL 72712 or Richard Jaeger, 3515 # 88th St; Tulsa, OK 74137-2602
South Central - Joyce Speed, 4680 Wisteria St; Dallas, TX 75211
Southeast - Leslie & Dave Wayment, PO Box 780791; Sebastian, FL 32978

You can read the descriptions and see images of most of the prizes by downloading the last few AFMS Newsletters from the website (www.amfed.org).
A Word from the President

by Ron Carman, President

Show Time and Traveling

This past month my wife and I did more traveling, this time to the Rocky Mountain Federation show in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Albuquerque club put on a fine show and it was great to see many of the Rocky Mountain folks, as well as some from other federations. There were only two competitive exhibits at the show, but both were quite good; and both won trophies. I was delighted to hear at their federation meeting a report of an increase in overall membership during the past year. I found this very encouraging, and hope to see other federations follow this trend.

Of course I’m always trying to encourage more exhibiting, both competitive and non-competitive, at these shows. Our display cases are the best way we can show the public what the hobby is all about, whether it’s a collection of minerals or fossils, lapidary or jewelry work, or an educational display. The truth is, all of our exhibits are intended to educate the public toward one or more aspects of our enjoyable hobby. The AFMS supports exhibiting, and as you may already know, is sponsoring a seminar for would-be exhibitors and judges (we need more of those also!) concurrent with the AFMS show in Ventura. It will be taught by Jay Bowman of the Rocky Mountain Federation, an expert judge and exhibitor, who has taught many such seminars. All members are invited and sign-up information is on the AFMS website. It will be time well spent.

The Albuquerque folks didn’t disappoint us with field trips; they had two planned, one on Sunday and one on Monday after the show and naturally I signed up for both. Sunday morning I was all ready to start out and had driven maybe two blocks when I heard a warning beep and saw a light come on telling me to check tire pressure. So I got to spend my Sunday morning in Wal-Mart’s automotive department, but at least I had the peace of mind to know the tire was fixed for the longer trip to the Blanchard mine on Monday. Nearly twenty persons went on that trip and no one came away empty-handed. Those of us with proper equipment (hard hats and lights) were allowed to enter one of the underground areas, which was quite a trick squeezing into, but well worth the trouble. The outside collecting was also productive; we found a large barite boulder containing cavities with crystals of fluorite, so there was plenty of material for everyone. The weather was great for collecting, with cool mornings, warm afternoons, plenty of sunshine and plenty of minerals. Last but not least, the view from the top of the hill was magnificent! It was a great conclusion to a great show!

In May we will go to the Midwest convention in Minnesota and the Northwest convention in Montana; This traveling may give me the time to visit more collecting areas and learn more from the good people in those federations. Another good thing about our hobby is that you never stop learning.

I hope to have even more encouraging items to report at the AFMS convention in Ventura in June and hope to see you all then if not before! You can find more information and registration materials for the convention on the AFMS website (www.amfed.org).

Ron
Safety Matters – Going it Alone
by Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair

Going it alone, getting away from it all, escaping the concrete canyons, taking a hike, or just goin’ rockin’, we are a traveling hobby. Unless one does a good deal of mail order, we go to the rocks instead of their traveling to us.

A friend of mine enjoys going it alone while looking for the yellow metal. He enjoys using his metal detector in the remote high country of California. His preference is to go where no man has gone before -- or at least no one has gone in a long, long time. When I ask him of his adventures he often mentions “incidents”. Those “incidents” have raised the hair on the back of my neck on several occasions. I know it’s none of my business, but as a safety minded person, I feel obliged to express my concern about his desire to go it alone. “No problem”, he assures me.

While young men may think themselves indestructible, I have other thoughts on the matter -- and this friend of mine is not young. So using that story as a lead-in, here are some thoughts on goin’ rockin’ alone:

1. Keep the folks or friends or relatives or someone you trust apprised of your travel plans - roads, trails, time tables, details. If one is going up mountain, mention which trail. Many areas have several trails all going to the same place, yet offer different starting points. It is not a good idea to tell folks you are going one place and not bother to tell them that you have changed your mind and will instead, at the last minute, go some place different. Periodic contact with the folks back home is a good safety idea and will go a long way in reassuring them of your well being!

2. Have a fully charged cell phone and, if possible, an extra battery or way of charging the phone in the wilds and woolies. Keep checking your bars (not the ones along the highway, but the ones on your phone) for reception and be aware that there are many areas where there will be no bars (of either kind) to be found.

3. Bring sufficient water times two. It is often the case that, when working in a hot pit, one drinks more (or should drink more).

4. Have maps with you, the kinds that do not require a battery. Learn how to use the maps! There is a good deal of useful information on them.

5. Have a first aid kit and your meds with you - not back in the truck which is parked a good (or not so good) five miles away.

6. Have and utilize good clothing, footwear and safety gear including snake bite proof boots, bug powder, sun screen goggles, survival gear, flash light or whatever one thinks is appropriate to the conditions...and speaking of conditions...

7. Mind the weather as conditions can change rather suddenly.

8. Have a plan B (and C, D and E) as the conditions and situations warrant.

9. Take rest breaks before you are tired, not after. the same goes for drinking water. Drink before you are thirsty, feeling thirsty means you are already dehydrating.

10. Have food with you. To save carrying weight, there are numerous energy foods and power bars available.

11. There are perhaps 11 million other safety rules, think OSHA and MSHA, so just keep in mind the ones most germane to the going-it-along place your are heading.

Numerous safety and survival guides are available. You might find a great many practical and useful ideas in them.

Yes, I can hear eyes rolling loudly and comments of “Yes dear”, and “Yes mother” with the above point; but my yellow metal digging friend is still with us, no more “incidents” have been mentioned to me - so maybe what I mentioned to him is working.

Please be safe. Your being safe is, I suspect, important to more folks than you might realize.
Is My Bulletin Attractive and Interesting?

by Mark Nelson, BEAC Chair

The Bulletin is the heart of a club! It beats with the tempo of a club’s activity. The bulletin keeps members interested in club activities and attracts new members. It is a record of club activities and it is one of the best sources of material for our club’s Yearbook. To keep this vital organ strong and relative to the needs of the club we need to give it a check-up periodically, and the experts at AFMS have given us the tool to do this. Pick up your bulletin and give it to a friend who reads a lot and ask them to evaluate it with these key points:

FIRST IMPRESSION.
Our bulletin has to compete with the other publications that our members receive. When they open it will they have a good first impression? Is it legible, neat and attractive? Will they want to open it and read what is inside?

VITAL INFORMATION.
Does our bulletin’s cover or first page contain the bulletin name, club name, city and state?
Is our bulletin’s month and year listed on the cover page and on each page thereafter?
Is there a return address on back cover (mailing area)? This may be the editor’s address and is often accompanied by a box with the words “Return Service Requested” so that, if there is a change of address of a recipient, the editor will be notified by the Post Office.
Does the bulletin contain the editor’s name, address and email so that members can mail information or articles to he or she?
Does our bulletin contain club officers and their contact information, club address or contact info, dues, purpose and club federation?
Is the date, time, place of regular meeting listed?

FORMAT/EDITORSHIP.
Are all pages numbered (except cover page) and contain the month, year and bulletin name?
Do the subjects contained on each page have headings? Are the margins, white space and spacing good? Is the typing neat, clean and justified?
Does the bulletin contain an orderly & interesting arrangement of subjects? A table of contents on the cover page is one way of keeping the bulletin orderly and consistent from one month to the next.
Has the spelling and grammar been checked? Using someone else to read and correct the bulletin is a good idea.
Are ALL articles credited to a writer or publications? If you borrow an article from SCRIBE or another club are they credited to the writer or publication and dated? Have we avoided any apparent copyright violations?
Does the information in our articles appear correct - with no glaring inaccuracies?
Do our pages and articles make good use of illustrations (graphics, maps, club logo, cartoons, etc.)?
Is there a variety of material (articles, reports, field trips, etc.) that would both fulfill needs of the club and the interest of the members?

CLUB NEWS.
Are the upcoming club program announced, previous program reviewed? This does not need to be an extensive report. A very brief note of key items is fine.
Does the bulletin contain the highlights of the last club meeting? This can be a very short paragraph. Generally, long recaps of board or program meetings lose the interest of our readers.
Are the board meeting reports and president’s message short and concise? Again, long recaps and reports should be avoided.
Does the bulletin contain information about field trips, workshops/classes, community and federation projects? These, also, can be brief but are of greater interest to our members.
Does the bulletin have a listing of coming events, or calendar of club activities? The back cover is a good place for a calendar. Make sure that it is below the fold.
Is there a place to list the events or shows/news of other clubs? Our members enjoy attending these shows to obtain lapidary items. The listing does not need to be extensive and can only list those within an hour’s drive of our club members.
News of members and new members helps our readers to understand that our club is vibrant and active.

FEDERATION NEWS.
Belonging to a Federation helps clubs attract and retain members. Members know that they are a part of a network of other clubs that work to advance the hobby. Our bulletin should note this.
There should be some news of both the club’s Regional Federation and the American Federation News. This does not need to be a long article - just something concise and relative to our readers.
Has your bulletin won an award from the Regional or American Federation? List or note that in your bulletin. Let the members know that your club and its Editor are engaged in best practices.

ARTICLES.
Articles are very important to keeping the interest of our members. Each month our bulletin should have a selection of articles.
One monthly article should be educational and hobby-related.
The bulletin should have a monthly article on hints, tips, safety info, book reviews, humor, etc.
There should be original articles and items submitted by club members or the Editor.
There could be articles from exchange bulletins, SCRIBE’s Best Of The Best and/or other sources. Be sure to credit the article’s author and the bulletin that it was borrowed from!

For a handy checklist of these guidelines, go to the AFMS web site at www.amfed.org. Scroll down to Bulletin Editors’ Contest. Select this and scroll down to Fillable Score Sheets and select Bulletins. You can print the PDF form and use it to evaluate your club’s bulletin. These guidelines have been developed by the American Federation with the input from newsletter experts. If our bulletin follows these guidelines we will have members who WANT to read our bulletin, WANT to submit articles and it will keep new members engaged in club activities. Our members will see this professional approach to the bulletin and our Editor will begin to receive comments of appreciation! Finally, don’t forget to enter your bulletin in your federation’s bulletin editor’s contest!
AFMS Club Rockhounds of the Year

from Evelyn Cataldo, AFMS Chair

California Federation

We are honored to present Darren & Julie Smith as the Mother Lode Mineral Society’s AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year for 2017. Although relative newcomers, the Smith’s efforts, through their daily activities and contacts, have resulted in a significant increase in raffle prizes for our annual show. Their efforts have increased our show attendance. At the last Stanislaus County Fair, the Smiths not only handed out many society information booklets, they spent considerable time discussing the benefits and social interaction activities of the society. Their son, Jaiden, handed out club brochures and polished rocks to all the children who stopped at the booth. Their efforts brought new members to the society.

submitted by Bob Rush, Federation Director

The Mother Lode Mineral Society is proud to honor Jaiden Smith as our outstanding 2017 AFMS Junior Club Rockhound of the Year. He has enthusiastically participated in the junior meetings and activities and worked hard to learn all that he could about the meeting subjects. He is constantly promoting the Society’s junior programs to his friends and classmates. As part of a 4th grade assignment, he studied and researched fossils. His presentation was so well received that he was asked to repeat it for each of the school’s 2nd grade classes. He gave out fossils to a total of 92 students. At the last Junior, meeting Jaiden asked his classmates and friends to come to the meeting as guests. This act swelled the attendance by 13.

submitted by Bob Rush, Federation Director

Jaiden is the Anaheim Searchers’ 2017 AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year. He is undoubtedly the most complete rockhound we know. If you need an expert digger, he is in the hole breaking out rock. He will give it to other members and also bring back rock for the silent auctions and workshop. Need a guest speaker at the last minute? As a very effective communicator, call Jimmy and he will handle the job. On field trips, Jimmy’s rig anchors the sign center, the potluck on Saturday night and is the welcoming rig for new guests. Need an award for a member, a plaque, a sphere, or a clock? He is the man. He is the consummate rockhound! Jimmy has been 2nd Vice President and Director more times than we can remember.

submitted by Robert Burson

Eastern Federation

The Gem and Mineral Society of the Virginia Peninsula (GMSVP) is pleased to proclaim Holly Worsham as our Rockhound of the Year. Our web site needed a major overhaul. Recognizing the need, Holly volunteered to be our club’s webmaster. With the Board’s approval and her considerable skills, Holly purchased and used a new web design tool to develop a new website that won first place in both the EFMLS and AFMS 2016 web site contests. The web site’s success is evidenced by the 184 unique visitors and 798 page views to our web site in the last week alone! Well done Holly! The GMSVP is truly fortunate and grateful to have you as our webmaster.

submitted by Sara Beth Phillips, President

Northwest Federation

The Cascade Mineralogical Society of Kent, Washington announced that Bob Pattie is our 2017 AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year. Bob has been active in CMS for over 40 years. He has held nearly every club position, including president four different times. He has been an officer of the Washington State Mineral Council since 1975. Bob has made presentations to Boy Scout troops, schools, home school sessions, other clubs, and organizations across the state of Washington. Bob helped put together the original WSMC map books, and continues to help with updates. He has written an article for Rock & Minerals as well as letters and presentations to legislators in Olympia on land use issues. He works tirelessly to keep sites in Washington open for collecting. He has represented the WSMC on various state committees on land use and road access.

submitted by Mel Stairs

AFMS/CFMS Convention

To find out more about the upcoming AFMS/CFMS convention and show, visit <017cfms-afmsshow.com>. Once there you can find the schedule of events, download all the registration forms for the show including those for competitive and non-competitive displays. Please note that the deadline for making advance banquet reservations is April 30.
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.

Upcoming Regional Federation Conventions

Listed below are the regional federation conventions for 2017 and a few for 2018. We hope that you can attend at least one within your own regional federation.

In order to avoid conflicts with having more than one regional federation convention on the same weekend, please notify me as soon as your dates for 2018 and 2019 are confirmed so we can publish them in this newsletter. My contact info is on page 7.

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<th>California Federation</th>
<th>Eastern Federation</th>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>AFMS</td>
<td>October 21-22</td>
<td>May 6 – 7 Braveand,MN</td>
<td>May 19-21 Hamilton,MT</td>
<td>March 18-19 Albuquerque,NM</td>
<td>November 10-12 Humble,TX</td>
<td>October 20-22 Knoxville, TN</td>
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<td></td>
<td>AFMS</td>
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<td>2018</td>
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<td>40 Raleigh, NC</td>
<td>40 Springfield, IL</td>
<td>April 6 - 8</td>
<td>40 Yakima, WA</td>
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Here is the listing of the people who have agreed to serve as Committee Chairs for 2016-17. Please feel free to contact these people if you need information, have questions or would like to share ideas with them.

All American Club
Regina Kapta
<cigmc@comcast.net>

AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year
Evelyn Cataldo
<cataldoevelyn@yahoo.com>

AFMS Newsletter
Carolyn Weinberger
<editor@amfed.org>

Boundaries
Bob Carlson
<illegitimusnoncarborundum@inbox.com>

Bulletin Editor’s Hall of Fame
Carolyn Weinberger
<editor@amfed.org>

Bulletin Editors Advisory
Mark Nelson
<MNelsonair@aol.com>

Bylaws Revisory
Steve Weinberger
<central_office@amfed.org>

Central Office Administrator
Steve Weinberger (see Bylaws Revisory)

Commemorative Stamps
Wendell Mohr
<wmohr@erols.com>

Conservation and Legislation
John Martin
<smartin@antelecom.net>

Convention Advisory
Emerson Tucker
<emersont@suddenlink.net>

Endowment Fund
Cheryl Neary
<ciervo.neary@gmail.com>

Financial Investment
Lauren Williams
<slharuir@msn.com>

Historian
Jennifer Haley
<ladyuglane@napablogger.com>

Inter-Regional Field Trip
Doug True
<dtruefossils12@yahoo.com>

Judges Training Seminar
Marion Roberts
<mvroberts1@comcast.net>

Junior Programs
Jim Brace-Thompson
<jbraceth@roadrunner.com>

Long Range Planning
Matt Charsky
<matt2430@comcast.net>

Name Badges
Frank Mullaney
<rockyfiv@aol.com>

Nominating
Matt Charsky (see Long Range Planning)

Parliamentarian
Steve Weinberger (see Bylaws Revisory)

Past President’s Advisory
Matt Charsky (see Long Range Planning)

Photography
Steve Weinberger (see Bylaws Revisory)

Program Competition
Doug Moore
<steinhund@gmail.com>

Publications
B. Jay Bowman
<bjb@wildblue.net>

Public Relations
Bob Jones
<jonesb52@gmail.com>

Safety
Ellery Borow
207-547-3154

Show Consultant
Emerson Tucker
<emertuck@gmail.com>

Uniform Rules
Marion Roberts
<mvroberts1@comcast.net>

URC Eligibility Files
Anne Cook
<abcook6@juno.com>

Ways and Means
Richard Jaeger
<rjgrsci@aol.com>

Website/Webmaster
Marty Hart
<webmaster@amfed.org>

Web Site Contest
Dan Imel
<lapidry@aol.com>

AFMS Scholarship Foundation
Lauren Williams, President
957 E Elva St; Idaho Falls, ID 83401
<slharuir@msn.com>
Ron Carman Vice President
Cheri George, Secretary
Gene Maggard, Treasurer
Shadow and Iris Agates

by Terry Roberts from Rock-N-Rose, November 2015.

3rd Place AFMS Adult Articles contest winner

When I read “The Beauty of Banded Agates” by Michael R. Carlson several years ago, I was awed by the beauty of these agates. Most rockhounds are familiar with the outstanding patterns and colors exhibited by Laguna, Brazilian, Dryhead, Fairburn, Condor, Queensland and other banded agates shown in the book. However, the author showed two types of agates that I was determined to find. These are the Shadow and Iris agates. Mr. Carlson provides an excellent description of each phenomenon in his book.

Shadow Agates display a shimmering optical effect caused by a phenomenon known as parallax. The shadow is caused by regularly spaced bands that are alternately clear and opaque. The opaque band is usually white in low quality agates, but can be bright colors in high quality agates. As light enters the agate at an angle to the surface of the bands, the opaque band will cast a shadow in the clear band since light is not reflected out of it. By moving the stone back and forth, the shadow will move across the bands. This can be seen in the photo where the shadow moves along the upper left side of the cabochon. A word of caution: This is not “chatoyance” which is an optical effect caused by the reflection of light from some fibrous material as seen in Tigereye.

The Iris effect is often, but not always, found in low quality agate that a collector may be tempted to discard. I finally found a good example of this phenomenon in an ordinary Brazilian agate slab that had no noteworthy patterns and very little color. This can be seen in the photos which show the Brazilian agate in reflected light and again in transmitted light from an incandescent bulb (the cab has pieces of lint on the surface from the polishing cloth that appear to be scratches).

This phenomenon is produced when light passes through a clear agate with extremely fine bands (up to 10,000 bands per inch). The bands act as a diffraction grating where the edges of the bands have alternately high and low refractive indices which cause the light to break into spectral colors. Since not all agates have evenly spaced bands and refractive indices suitable for separating colors in white light, the iris effect varies in quality and the number of colors that will be displayed.

In order to get the best colors from this cabochon, I had to grind it down to a thickness of about 2.5 mm in the center of the dome and 1.5 mm at the edge. If the agate cab had been any thicker, the colors would not have been noticeable. So, if you find a clear agate slab that appears to have wavy shadows that are caused by microscopic bands, you might try to grind it to a very thin slab. You may be rewarded with a beautiful Iris Agate.

Ode to Rocks

Written by Lilyth Amelia Cave, age 14
from Stone Chipper, February 2015
1st Place AFMS Junior Poetry contest winner

Ode to rocks that are everywhere
Ode to rocks that are just sitting there
Smooth or rough, big or small
Pretty or ugly, cube or a ball
All that matters is that it is a rock

Ode to rocks that are many shapes and colors
Ode to rocks that are just like the others
Green or blue, black or red
Small as a mouse or as big as my head
All that matters is that it is a rock

Ode to rocks that are big and shiny
Ode to rocks that are dull or tiny
Quartz or calcite, agate or sandstone
I don’t care, but I really like dinobone
But yet again all that matters is that it is a rock

Ode to ROCKS!!