Safety Matters - All it takes is one

by Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair

In this litigious day and age, sadly, all it takes is one action, one member, one disrespectful event to cause a property owner to boot an individual or a club from a collecting site. The best solution to such a problem is, most certainly, for it not to be a problem in the first place. Prevention is a great thing but there are limitations to what one can accomplish.

Club members can be coached, encouraged, guided, and otherwise instructed in the ways and means to be good rockhounds and remain in the good graces of property owners. However, accidents happen despite ones best effort. Worse however are the intentional disrespects of property owner’s wishes. What does a club do if a member willfully and repeatedly disregards a property owners wishes? It can be a very touchy issue to give a member the boot for disrespectful behavior at a collecting site.

A way of making the expulsion process easier is to have within the clubs rules, regulations, and bylaws a reasonably comprehensive description of reasons to expel a member whose disrespectful collecting methods reflect badly on the club’s field trip activities. No set of rules, regulations or bylaws can cover every incident but even so may be specific enough to everyone that certain behaviors and means are unacceptable... and then have a group of people, rather than a single individual, concur to remove a member from the club rolls. Having specific expulsion guidelines makes it easier to point to rules that say “Sorry, but we just cannot accept misbehavior of such a nature on digs, or any other club activity.”

An even worse situation occurs when a club is booted from a collecting site due to the activities of non-club member rockhounds. What can a club do in such instances? A good starting point is to stress to a property owner that the disrespectful collector was NOT a member of ones club and does not represent the respectful nature of club members. A good document to use in making such a case is the AFMS Code of Ethics.

Indeed, most of the items in the Code are items that have their roots in being safe and respectful! Even more helpful would be to, in addition to the AFMS Code of Ethics, have your own local regional federation and club guidelines relating to matters of respecting property owner rights and wishes. It goes without saying that having a calm, measured, and patient approach is helpful when discussing such matters with the owners of property that permit, or at least at one time permitted, collecting.

Your safety matters, so please keep in mind that respect plays an important part in safety. Respect for your personal limits, property owner limits, and codes of ethics all play a part in being and staying safe.
A Word from the President  
by Doug True, President

California Fire

As I am finishing my outline, I hear of a 7.0 earthquake in Anchorage, Alaska. Never seems to end, one disaster after the other. But right now I would like to concentrate on the Northern California Camp Fire that started on November 8th below and to the east of Paradise, California. Paradise was a bustling mountain community about 30 minutes from Chico, California.

I was in Yuba City about 45 miles south when I heard of the fire, I think about 8 am in the morning and called my cousin in Magalia just north east of Paradise. In less than an hour the fire was sweeping through this small community, destroying almost everything in its way. By the evening 6400 homes had been destroyed and 240 Businesses gone.

When this started to develop a number local gem club members started checking for their other members and getting them out of harms way.

At last count the Paradise Gem and Mineral club had about 100 members. The next day 98 of there homes were gone and several members were missing. Their club trailer was also consumed with all of their equipment.

One club completely gone in several hours.... It is just unbelievable for someone from the outside to really see what just happened.

So what is in the future for this club? Many of the members will never rebuild in Paradise or will move on to another city and they may give up collecting as their lifetime hobby is also gone. I have been fielding questions from all of the country asking what can we do?? If you want to help! Google the Camp Fire and and then look for local donation sites.

Right now these people are just trying to survive, they are probably not thinking rock, more like where am I going to stay, or where is our next meal going to come from? And winter has moved in with Mud flows and cold weather.

The best thing we can do now is to Pray for all those who were effected by this devastating fire. A salute to the Feather River Club from Chico for stepping up and helping as some of their members also lost homes. They are working a number of options for helping the Paradise Club, rock hounds stepping up.

As far as equipment donations, I might add that would be premature at this time, no one is thinking about cutting or polishing a rock. Survival is their goal. Lets wait and see what develops, As a federation our hearts go out to all of those people who were touched by this fire.

A.L.A.A. is Back

by Shirley Leeson

ALAA is back and has hit the ground running!

We will be at Cedar Rapids, at the national AFMS/MWF show in March, but this year we’ll be doing things a little differently. Our yearly business meeting has been changed to Quartzsite, and the ALAA meeting at the show will be an OPEN FORUM for YOU to bring to us your concerns and problems you have encountered while on individual or club field trips. We want to hear from YOU.

We don’t have the manpower to know everything that is going on, especially east of the Rockies, so share with us what’s going on. And most important, support ALAA by joining. Go to the ALAA website (http://www.amlands.org/).
Help Your Club Kids Find Fun in Communicating!

I never thought I’d be one of those stodgy old-timers who proclaims, “I remember when!” I cringed and rolled my eyes whenever I heard them. “I remember when we had 200 exhibitors scrambling to enter competition. We had to beat ‘em away with sticks!” “I remember when so many people wanted to join our club, we had to beat ‘em away with sticks!” “I remember when 500 people showed up at a field trip! Why, we had to beat ‘em away with sticks!” I may have rolled my eyes and thought to myself, “Yeah, right,” but alas, my rolling eyes have opened, and that is what I have become. To explain...

I’ve just finished the always enjoyable opportunity of judging junior articles for the annual AFMS Bulletin Contest. This year, the task was pretty easy given that we saw entries from just 3 of the 7 regional federations, with a grand total of only 5 junior articles. After mailing in this year’s results, I was conducting some good old fashioned Swedish death cleaning and came across a binder I used in judging articles back in 2007. After blowing away the dust and creaking open the binder, I found an eye-opening number: we had 25 junior articles entered a dozen years ago! Ah yes, I remember when...

To all regional federation newsletter editors: please share this article and encourage all local clubs and societies within your federation to offer carrots (not sticks) to pebble pups and junior members to write a brief article or even a paragraph telling about a recent rock- or fossil-related field trip or experience, a museum visit, a favorite fossil or mineral (for instance, the child’s birthstone), or anything rock related. CFMS President Tony Fender has declared 2019 to be “The Year of Communication” as his presidential theme. It’s a good theme that we all should pursue each and every day of each and every year.

When kids do write articles, each one should be sent in to the annual bulletin contests. Even if kids don’t win, the very process of writing will help them learn while stimulating their active mind. They just might have fun! Have fun guiding kids along and help them learn by writing and communicating. Who knows? They just might have fun!

What Happened to the February Newsletter?

by Carolyn Weinberger, Editor

Several of you have written to ask “What happened to the February AFMS Newsletter?”

The answer is simple. As some of you know, I’m suffering from an acute form of leukemia and was forced to spend 4 weeks in the hospital in January. Among other complications, I had a major infection on my leg and a GI bleed. My counts were too low for the docs to find the cause using a “scope” so decided to treat me with a ton of meds until I was strong enough to swallow a miniature camera designed to find the cause.

Meanwhile I was kept on a raft of pills and shots as well as a liquid diet which sapped my strength. Thus the AFMS Newsletter became a secondary activity.

I’m slowly regaining my strength and am sending a combined February-March issue. I’m panning on producing the next issue for April – with a March 1 deadline.

In the meantime, thanks to all for the cards and e-mails wishing me well.
“But I Don’t Have Anything New to Say” by Sue Webb, BEAC

One of the most challenging tasks an editor faces is getting folks to send in articles for you to publish in the newsletter—at least, it is for me. One comment I hear often is, “Well, I really don’t know anything to write about” or “I don’t have anything new to say.” My response to that is “Of course you do!” Members have lots to write about if they just think about it, and no two people have the same perspective on anything, not even on rocks.

So how to find something to write about? Journalists have long used the questions Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How to stimulate what they can say about a subject. Your members can, too. Here are some ways that you might help them go about exploring a topic and so encourage articles to flood in—well, maybe not “flood,” but at least “trickle.” Feel free to appropriate whatever you find useful here. It’s fairly common knowledge, and it’s very likely a technique you’ve used yourself a number of times.

WHO did something your members should know about—good things, interesting things, etc. WHO is a great member? WHO taught you something? WHO led—or went on—a field trip, not only for your group, but maybe some other organization or maybe a private trip?? WHAT do you like to do in your club? WHAT did you do? WHAT do you want to know about our hobby? WHAT is a certain rock or mineral? You can build an article around any of these questions—or plenty more that focus on WHAT something is, WHAT you or somebody did or will do or should do, what happened in the world that your members might find interesting, and so on.

WHEN is something going to happen? Is there some event happening soon members should know about? WHEN did something happen that you participated in or thought was important?

WHERE is there a great exhibit of minerals? WHERE can you find certain rocks or minerals? WHERE is a class or a meeting being held? WHERE did that great field trip go? WHERE was there a great show?

WHY should you wear closed toe shoes in the shop? Tie back your hair? Tuck in your shirt? Bring certain kinds of tools on a field trip? Stay out of abandoned mines? And so on.

HOW do you get the best polish on a cab? HOW do you solder a bail on a rough rock? HOW do you slab a fairly small but oddly shaped rock? Make a bracelet out of tiny little beads? Make a cage for those cabs some new members just finished?

Answers to any of these questions can get a member started and, you know, getting started is the hardest part!

What Is an Editor and What Do Editors Do?

Editor \é-di-tor\ 1 a: to prepare for publication or public presentation b: to assemble by cutting and rearranging c: to alter, adapt, or refine esp. to bring about conformity to a standard or to suit a particular purpose (carefully—ed the speech) 2: to direct the publication of (—s the daily newspaper) Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 10th edition, 1995.

Editors come in a variety of guises. Newspaper/magazine editors leap quickly to mind as do those of major publishing house. In my experience, these editors have various functions: managing editor who takes care of the physical and business aspects of a publication editor in chief who generally sets editorial policy content editor who is someone such as news editor, features editor, and so on editorial director who is the big boss in a publishing company outside of the CEO and those guys acquiring editor who finds and signs up the writers, or at least suggests potentially profitable works developmental editor who works with writers to help them organize their ideas and make then clearer and more effective copy editor who finds and fixes the writers’ mistakes And I am sure there are more.

Editors of society or club newsletters embody many of these functions. At least, in my role editing my society’s newsletter, I do. For instance, I fulfill the role of copy editor. That means I read the articles, features, and notices members submit with a careful eye looking for such things as misplaced commas and misspelled words as well as other errors such as it’s rather than its, a person . . . they, many elephant’s, affect rather than effect and a plague of other copy-editor pet peeves.

I’m also the acquiring editor. I’m forever jollying members to submit an article or a feature. I’m scouring the net for cartoons, images, and science news. I’m often doing a fair amount of actual writing; sometimes it’s something I work up from scratch, and sometimes it’s when I fix—i.e. rewrite—an article a member submits to make really good, clever ideas clearer, reduce wordiness, and so on. There’s little I can do, however, when an article is ineffectively organized or incompletely developed. At that point, I become another kind of editor—a developmental editor. I try to help the writer to effectively organize and develop the article. By the way, it’s as a developmental editor and a copy editor that you can help your contributors make their work likely to be successful in the regional and national bulletin contests.

I also am responsible for the design and layout of our newsletter. Should it be two columns? What fonts and size should it use (best practices say no more than 2 font families such as Ariel or Times Roman and no smaller than 11 point type)? What about color? How many images, how large? Where should they go? Word processors and publishing programs make all of this manifestly easier than it was 30 years ago when we had to do the job of layout with scissors and tape (or rubber cement—remember that?). In some companies, those decisions rest with the editor in chief or the editorial director. The actual implementation is the role of a design editor.

My newsletter is almost entirely distributed by email these days, but it wasn’t always, and I still send out a few paper copies to those who don’t have computers or email access (actually only about a dozen in our 250-member society). In that regard, I’m a managing editor. I actually print those few paper copies on my own computer now, but I used to ferry the original to a printer and collect the hundreds of copies a few days later. Then the copies had to be folded and put in envelopes and stamped and carried to the post office where I dumped them in the outgoing mail chute (I tried to foist those little jobs off on my husband when I could). I also arranged for the printer to be paid and bought the stamps.

So, that’s what I do. I’ll bet that those of you who are editors do at least all of that, and I hope your society or club appreciates you at least as much as mine does me (which is a lot), because you are doing a herculean job. My BEAC hat’s off to you, all of you, who are probably wearing five or six of those editorial hats, and who do wear them for love of our hobby and as a means to help, educate, and entertain members about the earth sciences.
Before you know it -

by Cheryl Neary

The AFMS Convention is right around the corner - and it will be time for the Endowment Fund drawings.

This year we have to date a total of 18 items. I am still hoping to gather more!

Recent additions to the beautiful assortment include the following:

#14: Tetrahe-drite and sphalerite on quartz; Kaprik, Romania donated by Matt & Jean Charsky Estimated value $135.00 (EFMLS)

#15: 438ct amethyst pendant with a 22-24 inch black spinel beaded necklace donated by Matt & Jean Charsky. Estimated value $125.00 (EFMLS)

#16: 18 inch multi-gemstone and pearl necklace donated by Matt & Jean Charsky Estimated value $100.00 (EFMLS)

#17: Medium size coiled ammonite dangle earrings donated by Matt & Jean Charsky Estimated value $75.00 (EFMLS)

#18: Opal & sterling pendant and chain donated by Lisha Collins, McPherson Gem & Mineral Society. Estimated value $75.00 (RMFMS)

Why support the Endowment Fund?

Your donation of either an item donated to the fund or the purchase of tickets helps tremendously with this important fundraiser for the Federation. The interest from the monies generated is used for AFMS special projects, such as, junior badges, judges training, digitizing of slide programs, to name a few.

Please - consider buying tickets - Tickets will be available until for purchase at the convention until Friday night!

Tickets for the drawing are $5.00 per ticket or 5 for $20.00. You may purchase your tickets from your Federation’s representative as follows:

California: Heidi Hall
233 Fairway Dr; Santa Rosa, CA 95409
hdafler@yahoo.com

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

Midwest: JC & Donna Moore
25235 N State Route 97; Cuba, IL 61427
jcmoore3rd@gmail.com or mwfsecretary@gmail.com

Northwest: Judi Allison
1701 NW 11th St; Hermiston, OR 97838
jall@eotnet.net

Rocky Mountain: DeLane Cox
8152 Spanker Ridge Dr; Bentonville AR 72712
delanec3@earthlink.net or
Richard Jaeger, 3515 E 88th St
Tulsa, OK 74137 rjgrsci@aol.com

South Central: Joyce Speed
4680 Wisteria St; Dallas, TX 75211
llispeed2@gmail.com

Southeast: Leslie & Dave Wayment
PO Box 780791; Sebastian, FL 32978
aastainedglass@bellsouth.net

All pictures of the items and any new donations will be listed on the website.

If interested in donating a mineral specimen or piece of jewelry or equipment, the criteria is a minimum value of $75.00 and not heavier than five (5) pounds (with exceptions to equipment – if it can be brought to and distributed at the convention!)

Please contact me at ciervo.neary@gmail.com if you have a donation.

Remember, the Endowment Fund helps supports the future of our organizations and our hobbies, including minerals, fossils and geology to name a few!

Club Rockhounds of the Year

via Patty Amos

South Central Federation

The Big Spring Prospectors Club would like to nominate, posthumously, Marvin Lamb as Rockhound of the Year for 2018. He joined the club in 1973, but became more involved in club activities after he retired in 1983. Marvin did not work the rocks. His joy was in going on field trips, going to area and Federation shows and visiting with other rockhounds. His interest was in finding the rocks, seeing them worked into pretty cabs and jewelry. One of his favorite trips was to Arkansas to the crystal mines every year for many years.

He ran the spinning wheel at our shows from 1985 until 2015 when health problems prevented him from doing so. He still loved to sit in the booth and watch the children spin the wheel. He enjoyed club activities until his passing in May 2018. We would like to honor his memory at this time by making this nomination.

Submitted by Megan Summers and Dotty Long

Midwest Federation

The Rock River Valley Gem and Mineral Society of Loves Park, IL is proud to announce our Rockhound of the Year Award winners for 2018: Ruth and Chris Cox.

Ruth and Chris Cox are relatively new members of our club, but they have stepped up to accept responsibility at first for hospitality and now as Secretary and Vice President, respectively.

It is surely a pleasure for our club to have them as officers and to have them receive this award. Congratulations, Ruth and Chris.

The Dayton Gem and Mineral Society (DGMS) nominates Mr. John Steidle for the Midwest Federation 2018 “Rockhound of the Year” award. He has been an active member of the Dayton Gem and Mineral Society since 1970. During those 48 years, he has served in numerous capacities for the DGMS including President, Secretary and Newsletter writer/editor.

John is an avid gem and mineral collector, yet his real love is faceting. Over the years he has become very skilled, proficient and productive, bringing in several pieces of his handiwork to almost every DGMS monthly meeting. Being a Jack-of-all-trades and a person who seems to be able to fix or build anything, he built his own faceting equipment. John is certainly the club’s resident expert on anything involving this “facet-nating” art and science.

All of the members of the DGMS are fa- continued on page 6
Club Rockhounds

continued from page 5

miliar with John’s years of participation and devotion to the club. We believe that he is richly deserving of this prestigious MWF award

Patient, Helpful, Knowledgeable. These are the words to describe Parma Lapidary Club’s Rockhound of the Year for 2018. – Joe Codney. Joe has been doing lapidary work for many years. He draws on this experience when teaching members how to correctly form a quality cabochon. Not only does he teach proper use of the machinery, but also, how to clean the equipment. Joe comes to the club to work on his stones, but often ends up helping to repair equipment or teaching someone how to cab.

He is Generous with sharing his knowledge, his slabs, tasty snacks and the bounty from his garden. (Members look forward to when he brings in those delicious tomatoes!) He always has a kind word and a good attitude towards people. Parma Lapidary Club appreciates all he does for us! Thanks Joe!

Eastern Federation

The Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse, New York is honored to nominate Bill and Sharon Viel as our 2018 AFMS Club Rockhounds of the Year. The Viels have been an integral part of the team effort to produce our annual show. Bill is responsible for all show security matters. He also orchestrates moving display cases and support materials to and from the show. Sharon sets up and oversees operation of our club booth. Under her watch, the booth setup has been enhanced and participation has increased so that it is a prominent feature in our show. Our show is greatly enhanced by Team Viel’s quiet, behind-the-scenes hard work and much valued dedication.

Submitted by Cheryl Brown, President

South Central Federation

East Texas Gem & Mineral Society would like to nominate Kinney Polve. We believe Kinney has earned the honor by his dedication to the ETGMS by serving as President for three years and taking the lead in finding the financing for purchasing a new clubhouse for the club to meet in. He also took the lead in starting the renovation of the clubhouse to include a workshop for members to practice their lapidary skills in, and make other necessary repairs to the building. Kinney also has been generous in donating rocks, slabs, and cabs from his extensive collection to our members who are unable to travel to other localities to collect rocks. In addition to sharing his collection with others, he has shared his extensive knowledge of various skills in the lapidary arts by teaching classes in silversmithing, cabbing, flint knapping, and other crafts to many of the club members. We believe his generosity in the above areas qualifies Kinney Polve for the title and honor of Rock Hound of the Year.

Submitted by Fred Mahaffey of East Texas Gem & Mineral Society

Upcoming Regional Federation Conventions

from Emerson Tucker, Show Coordinator

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Here is the listing of the people who have agreed to serve as Committee Chairs for 2018-19. Please feel free to contact these people if you need information, have questions or would like to share ideas with them.

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Nominating  
Sandy Fuller (see Long Range Planning)

Parliamentarian  
Steve Weinberger (see Bylaws Revisory)

Past President’s Advisory  
Sandy Fuller (see Long Range Planning)

Photography  
John Martin (see Conservation)

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<shharur@msn.com>

Sandy Fuller, Vice President  
Margaret Kolacyzk, Secretary  
Barbara Ringhiser, Treasurer
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 Land Use Policy

1. Adherence to the AFMS Code of Ethics assures compliance with most statutes and regulations governing collecting on public lands and encourages respect for private property rights and the environment. Clubs are urged to read the AFMS Code of Ethics in at least one meeting every year, to publish the Code frequently in the club newsletter, and to compel compliance on club field trips.

2. Individuals and clubs are urged to write their elected representatives and land use management agency supervisors regarding issues of rule making, legislation and enforcement affecting field collecting of minerals and fossils.

3. Individuals and clubs are urged to join and support activities of the American Lands Access Association (ALAA), a sister organization with responsibility for advancing the interests of earth science amateurs with legislatures and land use management agencies.

4. The AFMS will receive a report from ALAA at its annual meeting.

5. The AFMS endorses the principle of multiple use of public lands as a guarantee of continuing recreational opportunities.

6. Wilderness and monument designations are inconsistent with the principle of multiple use. In view of the vast amount of public land already designated as wilderness and monuments, future such designations should be minimal, taking into account the increased demand for recreational opportunities, including rockhounding, created by a growing population.

7. In furtherance of the principle of multiple use, the AFMS believes that laws, regulations and rules established by relevant governmental authorities should be designed to allow freest possible access to all public lands, coupled with minimal restrictions on the recreational collection of minerals, fossils, gemstone materials and other naturally occurring materials.

8. A right to collect minerals and fossils on public lands should be protected by statute.

9. The AFMS urges its members to work with any or all government authorities to achieve a good working relationship in order to improve the “Public Image” of recreational collectors.