From the Desk of the President  
Cheryl Neary  
AFMS President 2022-2023

“Everyone you will ever meet knows something you don’t.” – Bill Nye the Science Guy

I always told the children in my family that every day you should be learning something new. Years ago, I traveled with my younger sister and her three young children to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. It was during their summer break. We visited a few historical places during the day. At night, during dinner, I started asking them questions about what they saw and did not need to learn anything! I then informed them, no, every day you need to learn something new. A few days later, we were traveling back to New York. I hadn’t seen the Pixar movie Cars at that time, and they had a DVD player that I did not know how to work. My nephew helped me set it up, and I got to enjoy the movie. At the end, my one niece said, “Aunt Cheryl - I learned something new today.” I gasped- “You did!” She replied beaming, “yes, you don’t know how to use the DVD player.”

This little anecdote plus the quote from Bill Nye is very relevant, especially if you are planning on attending your federations’ or the AFMS convention. You will meet old colleagues and new acquaintances. Take the time to talk and listen to whomever you meet. Perhaps they know something about lapidary or a fossil, rock, mineral or gemstone that you had no idea about.

The reason many of you joined a club is that it allows you to meet new people who live or work in the same general area as yourself and share similar interests. Clubs have existed for thousands of years, evidenced by Ancient Greek clubs and associations in Ancient Rome. In the Middle Ages, the Masonic Lodges evolved from the practices and rituals of the stonemasons’ guilds.

One of the reasons you are a club member is to learn something new that you did not know or forgot prior to the meeting. You do this in an environment that not only allows you to learn but to also be social. Many club members find they make lifelong friends through their club. How is this so? At one point they began to talk about something and found they had more in common, and a friendship was born. It is the same at the conventions. You will meet people who become lifelong friends. However, you need to be there to make this happen!

They say the more active you are, the more energy you have throughout the day. So, why not be more active in your club and federation? It is just as good for you physically as it is mentally. There are many positions in each club that need to be filled by the right person. Possibly you are that right person? It could very well be a position in your club that you never thought about performing. For instance, Meet and Greet - your job to make the members feel welcome. Junior Chair - perfect opportunity for you to share what you know with others eager to learn!

Your federation mimics your club’s structure as well. They are always looking for volunteers to share their experience and expertise, but as with your club, they are always open to teaching you something new.
If you take the opportunity and time to see the listing of officers on the AFMS website, you will see that many positions are open and eagerly awaiting you to volunteer!

At this time, I would like to thank all the volunteers of the federations and especially for the AFMS board and chairs for their support. The Federation would not run as smoothly without them! The dedication of both Pat LaRue and Donna Moore has been key in our Federation. Communication would not be possible without Linda Jaeger and her great work.

I formally want to thank Richard Jaeger for his years as Ways and Means Chair. He has humbly resigned. I am happy to report that Judy Beck, former president of RMFMS and AFMS has agreed to take on the chair!

Jim Brace-Thompson has also been active in his new position, Public Relations, and I would like to thank him for his continued support of that position. I also appreciate that he recognized the work done by Fran Sick of the EFMLS.

Delane Cox has been promoting New Programs, not an easy task! Start thinking about next year - put a program together that can be shared by all - and teach someone something new!

I also would like to thank the Juniors Committee for the excellent work and progress they have offered the Federation. I am not sure you realize that the Juniors Committee meets monthly via Google Meet, thanks to Dave Wayment. Lora Hall, Joan Stoker and Dennis Gertenbach are the backbone of the committee, joined by many others. Many of the clubs should be more active with this program! Be the person to initiate a juniors program - you will get support from the AFMS.

Jennifer Haley, our historian, has also done a great job with her position. Additionally, she has offered her talents to the Juniors Program with her fine dragons and mastodons. Not sure what I am talking about? Why don’t you send her an email? By the way Jennifer - I want to purchase a mastodon - for my grandson or maybe just for me! Either way, Jennifer has graciously volunteered to support the Juniors Program through the sale of her donated animals!

Everyone on the board and committee chairs has something they can offer you if you take the time to visit them at the conventions. Just as you, too, can teach all of us something new!

Put it on your calendar - learn something new today!

Appreciating a Blast-from-the-Past: Practicing Public Relations All Year Long

Jim Brace-Thompson, AFMS Public Relations Chair

In future articles, I’ll turn to our current media age and the need to fully embrace social media in pursuing effective public relations campaigns. But this month, I’ll again return to a “blast-from-the-past” and embrace Francis Sick’s advice from the “old school” days. Fran was our AFMS Public Relations Chair from 2007 to 2011, and she was our last PR Chair to religiously provide advice month after month within these pages. I encourage you to read her super-helpful columns in our AFMS Newsletter archives at https://www.amfed.org/news/default.htm.

Fran suggested more than a decade ago that we need to practice public relations all year long: As she said, “One weekend a year doesn’t do it.” All too often, clubs do a one-time, one-year blitz focused on publicizing an annual show for something like a one- to three-month period and then go dormant for the next nine to eleven months. But public relations needs to be an ongoing all-year process, not a one-time event focused on a one-time activity. As Fran wrote back in 2008, “successful clubs are doing everything they can to make themselves known and appreciated in their communities. They make use of any public forum available to them.”
Rockhound Crafts — Let’s Bring More of Them Back!

Jennifer Haley, AFMS Historian

Part of my job description as historian is to keep an eye out for ideas from our past that might be beneficial for our societies and club members today. One area I have admired about the history of AFMS-affiliated rockhounds is the creativity in the lapidary arts and crafts.

The first society I belonged to kept binders full of all the various craft tutorials with photos found in the old lapidary magazines. They did this so their club members could look through the binders to find new things they’d like to make. I loved looking at these. Whenever I am at a society show, I like going through the stacks of these old magazines to see what I might be missing in my personal collection of lapidary craft ideas.

I have noticed for quite some time now that it seems like there are not as many people having fun working on the many crafts of our past. These crafts can still be wonderful and inspiring today. I have often wondered why this is. I would love to see the enthusiasm come back for the crafts aspect of our hobby.

One of the ways to draw in new members is to show off what you can teach people to make. Bring back those wonderful crafts and display them in exhibits at your shows. Think about creating a program for your society’s library of the various lapidary arts and crafts. You can enter a program like this in your Regional Federation New Programs contest, where it may advance to the AFMS New Programs contest.

If all we have are the memories of what we personally have made, and we don’t try to pass our skills to new members and the incoming new generations of rockhounds, our hobby will forget some of those treasured skills.

Probably many of your societies have collections of the older craft tutorials from the heyday when the lapidary arts and crafts ideas were bustling. Find them and archive them before the old pages fade away. I recommend making the effort to scan them.

Let’s create a new heyday for lapidary arts and crafts. It will be easy to do, and we’ll have a lot of fun too.

Blast-from-the-Past: Public Relations

continued from page 2

In my own local community, we have a free biweekly newspaper and a free monthly publication that both whole-heartedly publicize events sponsored by clubs, societies, and other groups that merely need contacting to be included. The “merely” is the important part of that last sentence.

Do you have someone in your club enlisted to “merely” provide such info? It’s not that hard. You just find out the required deadline and where to send info about an upcoming club meeting, tailgate, field trip, show, or other event, and you send a simple announcement that often involves no more than a sentence or two. For instance, “The Ventura Gem & Mineral Society holds its monthly meeting on March 22, when we will host an exciting speaker telling us about dinosaur digs in Wyoming and an exciting field trip opportunity for this coming summer. Join us at 7:30 PM at Poinsettia Pavilion!” This is easy “old school” stuff that all too many clubs neglect, including my own. Just like many rock clubs, local newspapers are a dying breed. Let’s interact, support, and help one another live long and prosper!

As Fran wrote back in 2009, “Give more detailed information about what we offer. Don’t just advertise the club show. Make all your club events sound so exciting that people can’t wait to come. Don’t just mention the club has a workshop. Emphasize that expert instructors make it possible for anyone and everyone to learn to make their own quality jewelry at the very reasonable cost of basic membership. Whatever your club is doing that you love, others will love as well if only they know enough about it to encourage them to come in the first place.”

Speaking of supporting and helping one another...Rather than me telling you what public relations is and how to do it, last month, I invited your thoughts and comments on how your club or regional federation defines PR and what you do to implement all that’s associated with that definition. As of this writing, I have yet to receive a single response. I welcome ideas large and small. Please send your thoughts to me via snail-mail, e-mail, or phone: 7319 Eisenhower Street, Ventura, CA 93003, jbraceth@roadrunner.com, (805) 659-3577. I look forward to receiving suggestions, reflections, and ideas from those who matter most, namely, you! Whether a blast-from-the past or an idea that will lead us into the future, your thoughts and suggestions are needed and welcomed!
"M" Is for May — and Lots of Other Things!

Contributions from members of AFMS

In case you missed it, you have been challenged to research and write a short article about a rock/mineral/fossil/geologically-related term that begins with the letter of the current month. You’ll have to think a month ahead so the letter matches the first letter of the month of the AFMS Newsletter in which it will be published. Get ready for next month: what can you find that begins with “J”? (June)

If you read Cheryl’s President’s Report this month, recall the advice to “learn something new every day.” Thanks to Jim Brace-Thompson (Ventura Gem & Mineral Society, CFMS) and to Julia Allande (Tulsa Rock & Mineral Society, RMFMS) for their curiosity, research, and written explanations! And enjoy Wayne Mills’ poem, “Mountain Marvel” on page 11. I couldn’t resist including it with all the “Ms”! His poem was AFMS 1st place Adult Poetry in 2021.

M Is for Mammoths!

by Jim Brace-Thompson, VGMS

Other than dinosaurs and Megalodon sharks, few prehistoric critters hold attention so much as the great beasts of the Ice Ages: cave bears, saber-tooth cats, ground sloths, and mammoths. Our own ancestors hunted them and painted their images in the caves of Europe. Mammoths roamed the earth starting five million years ago. Examining cells from mammoths frozen in Arctic permafrost, scientists have determined they shared 98.5% of their genes with today’s African elephants. It’s believed elephants migrated out of Africa and evolved into two family trees. One led to today’s Asian elephants; the other, to mammoths.

Mammoths tromped their way throughout the Northern Hemisphere. In some states, their bones are so common they’ve been named the state fossil, as in Alaska, Nebraska, and Washington. Their bones have been found in my state of California, including the locally famous Moorpark Mammoth (an example of the Southern Mammoth, Mammutthus meridionalis) and Columbian Mammoths (Mammuthus columbi) excavated from the tar pits of Rancho La Brea. On the Channel Islands, a unique group of pygmy mammoths, Mammutthus exilis, trumpeted just offshore from my hometown of Ventura. It’s believed this population became stranded and underwent “dwarfism,” or shrinking over the course of generations, as often happens to large animals that find themselves on small islands with limited resources.

Most mammoths went extinct 10,000 years ago. A remnant population on Wrangel Island in the East Siberian Sea held on until 3,500 years ago—or the time of the Egyptian pharaohs! What finally did them in? Did cavemen hunt them to extinction? Were they wiped out by some deadly variation of today’s ebola virus? Or did they simply fail to adapt to changing climate? And is it possible that someday, using cells from mammoths frozen in the Siberian permafrost, we’ll be able to clone and raise the mighty mammoth to walk and amaze us in a “Pleistocene Park”? The answers are yet to be written and invite you to join in the hunt.

M Is for Moolooite!

by Julia Allande, TRMS

Sometimes we encounter a name or a specimen that is so totally Out-Of-The Ordinary that we cannot help but investigate further and then share what we have learned with others!

Moolooite -- who has ever heard of it? Not many, I guarantee! No, it is not a misspelling of Mookaite, which is a jasper found in Western Australia. Moolooite is a copper oxalate, Cu(C2O4)·nH2O from Mooloo Downs Station, Australia (of course!). The stuff is dull, waxy, translucent, turquoise-green or blue to green, of the orthorhombic system. Surprisingly, it leaves a blue-green streak. It is found as "micro-concretionary" crusts and powders in cracks and solution cavities.

The NEATEST thing about it, I think, is that it may be a bio-mineral formed by the action of certain lichens growing on cupiferous (copper-iron) rocks. These lichens act upon the bird guano and the weathering rocks beneath them, creating the resulting Moolooite.

Don't bother to try to obtain any specimens, however; it is so scare that the type material is held at the Government Chemical Laboratories in Perth, Australia.

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As you surely know, this year’s AFMS convention will be held in Billings. I should also add Montana, since there are five other states in the USA that have a place called Billings. The other cities of Billings are in: West Virginia, Oklahoma, Michigan, Missouri, and New York.

It would only take me a few hours to travel to the Billings, New York location, since it is in Dutchess County, east of the Hudson River and east of the Taconic Parkway in the lower southeast part of the state. I live on Long Island, so if you are familiar with the geography of the Empire State, you can see it is not too far! Billings, New York has an Alpaca farm!

Billings, Montana will be a three-day journey for me - a bit of a difference! This Billings has a bit more to offer. It is not only a city, but the largest city in Montana and has much more to offer than the namesake in New York.

In this article I will be talking about the Rims, so buckle up!

The following information is from the application for National Register of Historic Places Registration Form - Black Otter Trail at https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/96be4fe7-b5a5-43cf-9b01-8d0082c272ba

Billings is also known as the “Rim” or “Rimrocks” for the sandstone formations around it, north of the Yellowstone River. The formation is composed of Eagle Sandstone, deposited over 60 million years ago as the inland sea receded eastward during the Cretaceous Period. Weathering of the Eagle Sandstone creates the steep valley wall.

Swords Rimrock Park is a great way to explore this geological structure, providing breathtaking views and historic icons. The park is approximately a five-mile ride to the Yellowstone River.

The rim-top lands were deeded to Billings by George Swords in the late 1920s and then again in the early 1930s. George Swords was a civic leader in Billings, who donated the lands with a covenant that the land be used for park and recreational purposes.

There are over two miles of paved trails. The road that runs through the park was named in honor of late Crow Indian Chief Black Otter, who was killed in 1881. He is interred near the high point of the park, close to the present location of “Yellowstone” Kelly’s grave.

Anchoring the trail on the eastern side is the Boothill Cemetery, which was placed on the National Register April 17, 1979. This cemetery was from the early settlement of Coulson, Montana, which was in the Clark’s Fork Bottom. On the western side of the trail is the Billings-Logan International Airport. The Trail also provides multiple views of the Yellowstone Valley, the City of Billings, and numerous mountain ranges.

Under the New Deal’s Works Progress Administration (WPA), construction of the roadway began in March of 1936. All labor by the 150 men assigned to the project was by hand. Two months later, due to cutbacks in funding, the project was halted until the Billings City Council adopted the project and the roadway was completed in 1938.

A primary historic site is Luther S. “Yellowstone” Kelly’s grave site. “Yellowstone” Kelly, a famous Montana explorer and scout, requested that his remains be buried in Montana. In July 1929, Kelly was buried on a high point on the rimrocks, overlooking the Yellowstone River Valley.

Born in New York in 1849, Kelly joined the Army during the Civil War. He came to Montana Territory in the early 1870s and served as a scout from 1876 to 1878 at Fort Keogh. A frontiersman and explorer, he is credited for his accurate map of the Yellowstone River. In later years Captain Kelly served with the military in Alaska and the Philippines and eventually retired to a fruit farm in California. “Yellowstone” Kelly died on December 17, 1928. Prior to his death, Kelly requested his remains be "tendered to the Authorities of the State of Montana, at Helena." While both Billings and Miles City campaigned for the honor, eventually the Montana Historical Society chose the rimrocks above Billings for Kelly's final resting place. Luther S. "Yellowstone” Kelly was buried atop Kelly Mountain on June 26, 1929.

A year after Kelly's burial, I. D. O’Donnell, a prominent Billings businessman representing Suburban Homes Company, offered the City of Billings land on top of the rimrocks that included “Yellowstone” Kelly’s gravesite. O’Donnell’s offer stipulated that the city build and maintain a road to the Kelly monument. He thought a loop road would “enhance” the scenic attractions along the rimrocks.

Archaeological evidence indicates that early native peoples have visited this Yellowstone River region in the vicinity of Billings for over 10,000 years. Joseph Medicine Crow, the renowned Crow historian, believes the Crow were the first of the modern tribes to come to the rimrocks and that place as a main part of the Crow Country. The Yellowstone Valley served as home to the Crow for many centuries, while numerous other tribes camped and hunted there. The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 gave much of the Yellowstone River Basin west of the Powder River to the Crow Tribe. The Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 reduced Crow Reservation boundaries by removing all lands north (thereby including the rimrocks) and west of the Yellowataone River.

Plenty Coups, a Crow chief and visionary who lived from 1848 - 1932, allied the Crows with the white men, because he experienced a vision as a young man that non-Native people would ultimately take control of the Crow homelands of Montana.

One of his famous quotes is as follows: “Education is your greatest weapon. With education you are the white man’s equal, without education you are his victim and so shall remain all of your lives. Study, learn, help one another always. Remember there is only poverty and misery in idleness and dreams - but in work there is self-respect and independence”.

How true that statement is even today for many cultures throughout the world!

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benefit of sightseers. supported prominent businessmen, strove to promote the business interests and welfare of their community. In 1910, the Commercial Club
Throughout the history of Billings, organizations like the commercial club (predecessor to the Chamber of Commerce), led by prominent businessmen, strove to promote the business interests and welfare of their community. In 1910, the Commercial Club supported construction of the Heffner Steps, 27 steps cut by Heffner Quarry workers up the face of the rimrocks, for the benefit of sightseers.

In 1938 a poem by Jack Horan entitled “Black Otter Trail” was hung in the building of the Billings Commercial Club: continued from page 5

High places such as the rimrocks are important places for spiritual activities such as fasting, vision quests, and as burial places. The Crow warrior, Two Leggings, wrote that while fasting near the rims area he dreamed of seven men and one woman appearing "on the rimrocks north of the present town of Billings, singing 'Buffalo are coming toward me.'" Roger Turns Plenty understood that the Crow "used those high areas as fasting places ... to get spiritual help." Mary Wallace and Nelson Wallace both mention that the Crow used the rimrocks as a burial place where they made "Four Legs" (scaffolds) for burials.

A knoll near the Black Otter Trail is the burial ground for Chief Black Otter. According to L. M. Prill, in his Midland Review column "Driftwood," Chief Black Otter requested to be buried on this knoll so he could "look down the Yellowstone Valley and also look up the valley;"

A knoll is a British name that refers to a small natural hill which is characterized by a round top in most regions. Another term for a knoll is hillock. The mounds are situated either individually or in clusters. Knolls are formed by the processes of weathering and/or erosion caused by variations in hardness of the types of rocks.

The part of the rocks more resistant to weathering and erosion is topographically higher than the surrounding, less resistant rocks. Weathering over the years causes the protruding harder rocks to wear to a rounded top. Resistant rocks include basalt, conglomerate, lava flows, limestone, quartzite, and sandstone. Glaciers also can form knolls when the glaciers polish down hard granite or gneiss rocks or when the glaciers melt and shift down a sloping ground. Over time the mounds are shaped by weathering agents to form knolls. Knolls can also form by the deposition of eroded material.

Interestingly, the existence of a Crow chief named Black Otter is questionable. Alice Ryniker remembers her father, county surveyor C. E. Durland, told her they just made up the name. The idea for the name is often attributed to Arthur Hart, an early Billings printer who lived among the Crow at one time. According to L. M. Prill, in his column "Driftwood," the name was to honor "one of the old-time Crow Indian chiefs whose name was Bah-poo-tay Spita-cot." Prill related a story told to him by Frank Shively, a mixed-blood, about the death and burial of Black Otter. Reportedly, Black Otter was mortally wounded on the Missouri River in a battle with the Sioux and requested that "his body be laid to rest in the center of Crow country - on the high point at the North end of the rims." None of the five Crow informants interviewed expressed any knowledge of a Chief Black Otter as a member of the Crow Tribe. Joseph Medicine Crow had asked Crow historian Plainfeather if he knew of Black Otter, and he said no and he thought the white man created this themselves. Elias Goes Ahead thought there might be some confusion between Black Otter and White or Little Otter. Regardless, the trail was named Black Otter Trail.

Another point of interest is Skeleton Cliff. This butte got its name from its use as a burial place by the Crow Indians. A visitor to the place about 1860 described the place thus: "From each tree there was the skeleton, perhaps a hundred all told. The bones dangling from the branches . . . Bright blankets had been used as shrouds swathing the bodies. The bodies were bound to the trees with tough rawhide thongs. On the ground beneath these there were scattered brass and copper rings, elk tooth necklaces, beaded moccasins, belts, etc., property of the dead."

A butte is an isolated hill with steep, often vertical sides and a small relatively flat top, created through the process of erosion by water, wind and ice. Buttes were once the part of the elevated areas of land known as mesas or plateaus. Geographers say a butte is taller than it is wide, while a mesa is a much larger and less elevated rock structure. Debris that falls to the side of buttes is called scree or talus. Buttes usually form in arid regions, such as those in Mexico and the southwestern United States. Monument Valley, in the states of Utah and Arizona, has the most famous collection of buttes in the world.

Sacrifice Cliff, another historic location on the Black Otter Trail is known as the place where a large band of Crow Indians camped in the valley below prior to the late 1840s. An epidemic of smallpox broke out and nearly decimated the tribe. One legend stated that only two braves survived, the others died or died. These two braves jumped to their death to join their friends and relatives in the Happy Hunting Ground. Another version was that the Chief Medicine Man decreed that forty braves should offer themselves as a sacrifice to appease the anger of the Great Spirit, and adorned in ceremonial finery, they blindfolded their ponies and themselves and rode to their death from the top of the high bluff across the river. The Crow elders interviewed for the Historic Register remember the story of the village being decimated by smallpox and either warriors or brothers who jumped to their deaths after their loss of family and friends. Nelson Wallace noted that his uncle told him that both brothers rode double, with the older brother blindfolding both the horse and his younger brother, and he "whipped the horse and went over the rims." Both the Crow and the early settlers utilized the Yellowstone River Valley as a major transportation corridor. The "Road to Tongue River" followed the Yellowstone between Bozeman and Miles City. Alkali Creek flowed into the Yellowstone just east of the rimrocks and provided access to all points north.

In Clark’s Fork Bottom, the first town of Coulson was settled in 1877; however, this settlement was short-lived and surpassed by the establishment of the town of Billings in 1882.

The new town of Billings was situated directly on the route of the Northern Pacific railroad, which arrived in Billings in 1883. Billings gradually grew into the major socio-economic trade center for the region and its transportation hub.
2022-2023 AFMS Rockhound of the Year Recipients

Judi Allison, AFMS RoY Chair

Rocky Mountain Federation (2022 & 2023)
Pescott Gem and Mineral Club would like to recognize Maggi Lieber as our 2022 Rockhound of the Year. Maggi has served the Club in many capacities over the years. These include assembling and sending the Club’s newsletter in various forms since 2008, including bringing it into the ‘electronic age’; serving several years as the co-chair of our annual Show, and continuing to help with Show advertising; and as a stint as the Club’s Independent Director. Most recently, Maggi has served as the Club President and is continuing on the Board as the Immediate Past President. Way to go Maggi!

Prescott Gem and Mineral Club is honored to recognize John Munday as our 2023 Rockhound of the Year. "Encouraging" and "Helpful" epitomize John's attitude toward other Club members. He is quick to pitch in wherever needed, from helping sign members in at the beginning of our meetings to stacking chairs after the meeting. John has served as the Club's Independent Director; overseen the Geode-cracking booth at our Show; volunteers time to help members with lapidary work; and currently will be the Assistant Chair at our annual Show. We appreciate you, John!

Northwest Federation (2023)
Hells Canyon Gem Club has selected Jerry and Marylou Northrup as our Rockhounds of the Year for 2023. Marylou has served as Secretary, 2013; Treasurer, 2015-2023; Show Treasurer and Hospitality Chair, 2019; and NFMS Scholarship Chair, 2019-2023. Jerry has been Club Vice President 2021-2023 and the Club Federation Director from 2015-2023.

In addition to holding these positions, Jerry and Marylou have held leading roles in hosting our Club’s annual gem and mineral show. They have provided storage space for much of the club’s rocks and equipment that are used for the silent auction, both at our show and monthly meetings. Jerry and Marylou are quick to welcome new members into the club and get especially excited if they have children. Jerry’s pockets are always full of rocks that he freely passes out to the kids. Submitted by Lin Enger, Club Trustee

2023 NFMS/AFMS Show — Mark Your Calendars — Make Your Reservations

Judi Allison, NFMS Secretary

The 2023 AFMS/NFMS Show and Convention is coming to Billings, Montana August 3-6. The activities will take place at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center, 1223 Mullowney Lane. Our host, The Billings Gem and Mineral Club, is busy working to bring us a special show of “Montana Treasures.”

The AFMS meeting of directors will take place on Thursday, August 3rd. The NFMS meeting will be on Friday. Past Presidents and Committee Chairs will have the opportunity to enjoy some relaxing down time and conversation at the Saturday noon luncheon. Saturday evening’s social hour and banquet is sure to be a crowd pleaser. The editors/webmasters breakfast on Sunday morning will honor all those hard working folks who help keep us informed. Additional meetings, speakers, auctions, displays and sales will be interspersed in the mix.

Be sure to get your advance registration in early, as the closing date is June first. The club needs the information to complete their planning process. (See page 8 for the registration form.)

Along with enjoying a great show venue, plan to do some sightseeing and field collecting. The Billings Gem & Mineral Club is working to coordinate with other clubs to provide some great collecting opportunities during the week after the show. Details will be forthcoming.

The Billings area has a great deal to offer. Take in the Pictograph Cave State Park just five miles from the city. There are three caves preserved and protected in the 23-acre Park.

ZooMontana is a zoological/botanical garden, accredited arboretum and educational facility in Billings dedicated to the conservation of wildlife. ZooMontana cares for over 80 animals of 56 different species.

The Little Bighorn Battlefield is just sixty miles southeast of Billings. Here you can walk through the area and learn about the two-day battle fought by the American Indians. The Indian memorial, unveiled in 2003, “Peace Through Unity” remembers and recognizes those who fought.

Pompeys Pillar, about thirty miles northeast of the city, served as a meeting place for centuries. William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition carved his name in the stone, right next to American Indian petroglyphs carved there much earlier.

One only has to ask to take in an abundance of sights and history throughout the state. The Museum of the Rockies, including the Taylor Planetarium and Siebel Dinosaur Complex is housed in Bozeman.

Butte boasts the World Museum of Mining ‘Where History Tells a Story’. If you travel further east, you will find Makoshika State Park with badland formations and the fossil remains of numerous dinosaurs. With the richness of Montana history and sites, the list could go on endlessly. Rest assured, there will be plenty to see and experience. So plan to take those extra days and make a real excursion out of your trip to Billings.

We look forward to seeing you all!
Black Otter Trail by Jack Horan, 1938

The name Black Otter takes us back
to a day many moons ago
The redman on his hunting ground
in the land of the buffalo.
Just memories of a day gone by,
Beneath Montana skies so blue
In the land of the shining mountains
Where today we welcome you.

Photo by Sara Goth, Billings, Montana Swords Park Trail.jpg, CC BY-SA 3.0

Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies
Annual Show: Hosted by: Billings Gem and Mineral Club
“Montana Treasures”
August 3-6, 2023
Billings Hotel and Convention Center, 1223 Mullowney, Billings, MT
ADVANCE REGISTRATION Deadline: JUNE 1, 2023

(Please Print)

Name(s): ________________________________

Address: ________________________________

E-mail: ________________________________

Name of Club/Society ________________________________

Phone __________________________________

(Please Check all that Apply: Federation: RMFMS SCFMS CFMS MWF EFM LS NFMS SFMS

Officer: Chairman Delegate Alternate Editor Judge Clerk Other AFMS? Regional?

Exhibitor ______ (Exhibitors must complete this form and the Exhibitor Form)

Please Check the meetings you will be attending: AFMS Meeting _________ NFMS Meeting _______

SHOW ADMISSION (Please check) DAILY RATE x # DAYS 4 DAY PASS TOTAL COST

PASSES: $ 5.00 ______ $15.00 ______

Note: All food events require reservations (All food events on site)

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5th
Past President/Committee Chairs Lunch Buffet 12:00 PM ($24 per person x number of people) $ ______
(Roast beef w/ mushroom gravy, herb baked chicken, garlic roasted red potatoes, corn O’Brien, Tossed Salad fresh fruit bowl)

Social Hour 6:00 PM -7:00 PM
Awards Banquet 7:00PM - 9:30PM ($40 per person x number of people) $ ______
(Carved Baron of Beef w/ au jus, roast turkey, BBQ baby back pork ribs, baked potato w/sour cream & butter, glazed carrots, tossed salad w/ fresh vegetables or fresh fruit bowl and a dinner roll. Assorted dessert buffet.)

SUNDAY AUGUST 6th
Editors/Webmasters Breakfast Buffet 9:00 AM ($25 per person x number of people) $ ______
(Biscuits & gravy, cinnamon swirl French toast, scrambled eggs w/ cheese, crispy bacon, sausage links, breakfast potatoes, assorted pastries, and fresh fruit. Coffee, hot tea and orange juice.)

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE: $ ______

Make check payable to: Billings Gem and Mineral Club.
Mail application and remittance before June 1, 2023 to:
Billings Gem & Mineral Club
PO Box 80134
Billings, MT 59108

(Payments are non-refundable after June 1)

**For questions, please call Deb & Tim Zimbelman at 406-670-7261 or 406-670-6524
Back to Back Safety, And More

Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair

A thoughtful reader from the Tulsa Rock and Mineral Society kindly noted that a reference made in the recent Back to Back Safety article, appearing in the Newsletter, could use clarification. There is whole-hearted agreement with her point, and I wish to express my thanks to this member for taking the time and trouble to draw attention to the issue.

It is common when speaking or writing to utilize well known expressions as sort of a shorthand to save time in our communications. In this instance mention was made to lift a load with one’s legs instead of with one’s back.

The wrong way to lift an item is to bend at the waist, grab the item with one’s hands and straighten their back to the standing straight position – all the while holding the item in their hands. This style of lifting places an immense strain along the lower back and related muscles. The lumbar region is commonly overstressed and a source of pain if poorly exercised. Even if exercised, the lower back muscles cannot compare with the strength of the leg muscles.

The right way to lift is to stand very close to the item being lifted, bend one’s legs at the knees, squat down, and balance on the front parts of the feet. Then, while bending, spread the knees wide enough to draw the item being lifted close to the torso. Secure one’s grip on the item to be lifted. Then, while holding the item close to the body, straighten one’s legs to standing, all the while keeping the item close to the torso. The item being held close to the torso utilizes more of the strong leg muscles instead of the weaker lower back muscles. The expression commonly used to describe the correct lifting motions is to lift with the legs, not with the back.

The right way to lift still requires that the item being lifted lies within one’s safe lifting limits and abilities. When in doubt about one’s limits, seek help with lifting.

The Tulsa Rock and Mineral Society member made the apt observation that, when youngsters lift an item, they use the correct motions of bending at the knees and lifting “with the legs.” For an example of the correct lifting motions, observe a youngster picking up a ball, toy, or any item of interest to them. Youngsters know how to do it right without having had lessons from a physical therapist, or a concerned parent.

So, if you are lifting the right way, please give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done.

As the thoughtful reader noted – some common expressions are not common to everyone. With safety matters there should be clarity, brevity, and succinct descriptions. If there is doubt as to the meaning of a statement, please ask for clarification. The reader well understood the intention. With this added clarification, description, and example hopefully others will as well. Thank you. Happy and safe lifting to you.

AFMS Website Contest: Deadline May 15th

Lori Carter, AFMS Website Contest Chair; webmaster@southeastfed.org

Don Shurtz has run the AFMS website contest for several years, but last year, I was asked if I could give him a much-deserved retirement and become the new contest chair. Off to a rocky start, I am finally settling into the responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is setting the deadline for submissions from the regional federations: May 15, 2023.

Regional federations hold their own website contests. AFMS provides judges for those contests. Fortunately for me, Don passed along a list of excellent judges who have been so gracious and patient with me. The top 2 websites from each federation contest are then submitted to the AFMS contest by May 15th. AFMS judges will score the regional submissions, and the websites with the highest scores will be announced at the annual AFMS Breakfast with Editors and Webmasters in August. (Billings, Montana, August 3-6)

Anyone interested in the regional contests, please contact your regional website contest chair, and if you have any questions about the AFMS contest, please let me know.

After the contest is over, I would like to meet with the regional website contest chairs and all the judges to discuss ideas for improving the contest. Please let me know if you have any suggestions.

Thank you to Don for helping me, thank you to regional website contest chairs for your patience, thank you to the judges for being so kind to me, and thank you to all of the webmasters who submit their websites!

Editor’s note: Here are the chairs for the regional website contests as per the regional websites and newsletters—

CFMS, Diane Cook, <johndianedaisy at yahoo.com>; EFMLS open; MWF, Brad Zyalm, <brad.zyalm@mrm.com>; NFMS, Kat Koch, <bulletinaids at gmail.com>; RMFMS, Jennifer Gerring, <jgerring at gmail.com>; SCFMS, Don Shurtz, <don.shurtz at gmail.com>; SFMS, Lori Carter, <webmaster at southeastfed.org>.

AFMS Newsletter — May 2023
AFMS Scholarship Foundation — Auction Specimen

Sandie Fender, AFMS Scholarship Foundation President

As most people know, at the AFMS Banquet the AFMS Scholarship Foundation has an auction. This year the Foundation is auctioning off a cab of Priday plume agate from the collection of Tony and Sandie Fender, originally from Bill and Izzie Burns. It is a multicolored plume agate. It will be on display at the Scholarship Meeting and at the banquet.

Upcoming AFMS and Regional Federation Conventions

Walt Beneze, AFMS Show Consultant

Hi, I am Walt Beneze, and I am privileged to be the AFMS show consultant again for the year 2023.

As the show consultant, I can help by providing you with the necessary meetings and events list during your show. More importantly, I am a clearing ground for all upcoming Federation Convention dates. Since the AFMS officers come from all the Federations and are expected to be at the AFMS meeting, avoiding any conflicting dates with the AFMS convention is very important.

Please keep me informed as soon as you know the date and location of your next convention so it can be published in the AFMS newsletter. Thank you.

Editor’s Note: See CORRECTIONS in italics below to CFMS 2023 & 2024, RMFMS 2023, SFMS 2023, and added date for SCFMS.

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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 related subjects, and to sponsor and provide ways to coordinate the work and efforts of all interested persons and groups; to sponsor and encourage the formation and international development of Societies and Regional Federations and thereby to strive toward greater international good will and fellowship.

The AFMS Newsletter is normally published monthly except January, July and August by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Each Regional Federation Club is entitled to receive three (3) copies of the AFMS Newsletter. These are usually sent to the President, Federation Director and Editor.

Subscription information, distribution questions and address changes should be sent to the AFMS Central Office. Subscriptions are $5.00 per year. Checks should be made payable to “AFMS” and sent to:
Cheryl Neary
AFMS Central Office
42 Jefferson Avenue
Patchogue, NY 11772-1008
516-449-5341 <centraloffice.afms at gmail.com>

Content: Letters, Editorial Comments, Submissions
Any questions or other communication concerning the content or format of the newsletter should be sent to the Editor:
Linda Jaeger
3515 E. 88th St.,
Tulsa, OK 74137
<AFMSeditor at gmail.com>
Deadline: 5th of the month preceding publication
Material in this Newsletter may duplicated for non-commercial purposes provided credit is given this publication and the author. For commercial use, the individual author(s) must be contacted for approval.
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.

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 or 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.

"M" IS for May  
continued from page 4

Mountain Marvel by Wayne Mills, OMS

Mighty mountain worn to sand  
Reassembled and pushed up again  
Containing animals and plants  
Once numerous as ants.

Seashells from the mountain top  
Now a kitchen countertop  
And the age of these behold  
Not years, but millennia untold.

Each rock or tree or being  
An ordered universe divine.  
Of particles revolving, evolving  
and dissolving to the beat of time.

From The Ore-Cutts, 5/2020. AFMS 1st Place Adult Poetry, 2021.
AFMS Committees: 2022-2023

Here is the list of Committee Chairs for 2022-2023. You can contact these people if you need information, have questions, or want to share ideas with them. Please note that the @ sign in the email address has been replaced by the word "at" to foil bots that collect email addresses.

All American Club
Mary Boesdorfer
<writteninwood at gmail.com>

AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year
Judi Allison
<nfmssec at gmail.com>

AFMS Newsletter
Linda Jaeger
<AFMSeditor at gmail.com>

Boundaries
Doug True
2622 Broadwater;
Billings, MT 59102
<dtruefossils 12 at yahoo.com>

Bulletin Editors Hall of Fame
Frank Mullaney
<rockyfiv at gmail.com>

Bulletin Editors Advisory
Linda Jaeger & Cheryl Neary
<LJGRALG at aol.com>

Bylaws Revisory
Steve Weinberger
<cscrystals2 at gmail.com>

Central Office Administrator
Cheryl Neary
42 Jefferson Ave; Patchogue, NY 11772
516-449-5341
<centraloffice.afms at gmail.com>

Commemorative Stamps
Ellery Borow (see Safety)

Conservation and Legislation
Susie Koppert
<susiekoppert at gmail.com>

Convention Advisory
<>

Endowment Fund
Cheryl Neary
See Central Office

Financial Investment
Wayne Cox
<waynec3 at earthlink.net>

Historian
Jennifer Haley
<ladybuglane at napablogger.com>

Inter-Regional Field Trip
Doug True
<dtruefossils 12 at yahoo.com>

Judges Training Seminar
Open

Junior Programs
Lora Hall
<silvertipminis at msn.com>

Long Range Planning
MattCharsky
<matt2430 at comcast.net>

Name Badge & Trophy
Frank Mullaney
(See Bulletin Editors Hall of Fame)

Nominating
Matt Charsky
<matt2430 at comcast.net>

Parliamentarian
Evan Day
<>

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

Photography
John Martin

New Program Competition
DeLane Coy
<delanec3 at earthlink.net>

Publications
David Wayment
<aastainedglass at bellsouth.net>

Public Relations
Jim Brace-Thompson
<jbraceth at roadrunner.com>

Safety
Ellery Borow
<rocknellery at fairpoint.net>

Show Consultant
Walt Benezee
<wmbenlbk at gmail.com>

Uniform Rules
Northwest Federation

URC Eligibility Files
Leslie Wayment
<aastainedglass at bellsouth.net>

Ways and Means
Judy Beck
<Lkbeckfam at gmail.com>

Website/Webmaster
Marty Hart & Lori Carter
<webmaster at amfed.org>

Web Site Contest (open)
Lori Carter
<webmaster at southeastfed.org>

AFMS Scholarship Foundation
Sandie Fender, President
<sandie.fender at gmail.com>
Cheryl Neary, Vice President
Mary Bateman, Secretary
Barbara Ringhisier, Treasurer