

MAY-JUNE, 2024

NEWSLETTER OF THE
SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION
Of Mineral Societies



Member of: The American Federation of Mineral Societies

ON THE COVER

The roadcut at the Edwards Plateau showing the exposed thick layers of Edwards limestone. Located on Interstate 10 in West Texas. Photo: A conglomeration put together by Susan Burch of several photos found on the Internet.



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SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.

2024 SCFMS OFFICERS

President: Don Shurtz

Executive V-P: Sigrid Stewart

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Henry Rojas

Web Master: Don Shurtz

**Exec. Secretary:
Liz Burford**

**AFMS Endowment Fund Raffle
for SCFMS: Walt Beneze**

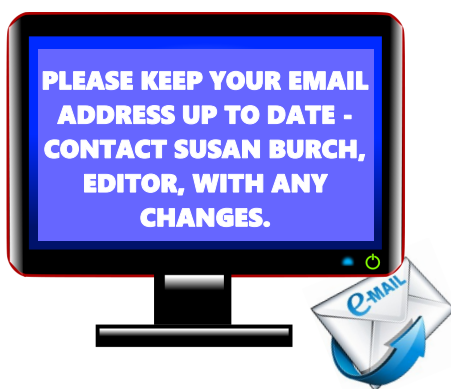
**SCFMS Endowment Fund
Treasurer: Walt Beneze**

**Nominating Committee –
Ron Carmen**

Past President: Roger Burford

For more information or to send information to the SCFMS or an officer, please email:

scfmsinformation@gmail.com



PURPOSE

*To promote popular interest and education in the various earth sciences, in particular those hobbies dealing with the art of lapidaries and the science of minerals, fossils, as well as their associated fields.

*To cooperate with educational and scientific institutions or other groups engaged in increasing knowledge in the earth sciences.

*To cooperate with or become members of similar Federations in the United States and elsewhere.

*To assist in the formation of earth sciences societies in localities where public interest justifies their formation.

**E-MAIL ADDRESS
CORRECTION AND CHANGES**
It is each members responsibility to send your email address corrections to the SCFMS Editor:

Susan Burch,
scfmseditor@yahoo.com

**NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED
BIMONTHLY**

DUPLICATION

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A NOTE FROM —THE EDITOR—

THE FINAL DEADLINE, ETC.



For each newsletter the deadline is the 20th of the month prior to scheduled publication. February-April-June-August-October-December all provide the deadline for the following bi-monthly issue. Although, the Editor may chose to adjust the deadline due to circumstances.

As a reminder! Shop hints and tips that are used in this newsletter have not been evaluated for safety or reliability by myself. Please use caution and safety when trying out any new idea. Please, if you have something urgent give me a call, but send newsletter content via email.

ANNUAL SHOW 2024

November 23-24, 2024

ANNUAL MEETING

November 23, 2024

**SCFMS WEB-SITE:
WWW.SCFMS.NET**

The SCFMS is a member of the American Federation of Mineral Societies. amfed.org

NEWSLETTER EDITOR/BEAC:

Susan Burch

scfmseditor@yahoo.com





First off, let me make a correction to my last newsletter article. Based on some incorrect information on the web, I had the wrong dates for the SCFMS Convention. Yes, the convention will be in November in Mesquite, TX. However, **the dates for the convention are November 23 and 24**. That would be the weekend before Thanksgiving. I know the Dallas-Ft. Worth area is not in the center of the SCFMS area, but it is a lot closer to the middle than our recent conventions. I hope that makes it a bit easier for the SCFMS Officers SCFMS Committee Chairs and the club presidents or delegates to attend. Please keep in mind that each SCFMS Officer and Club President or an appointed delegate is **REQUIRED** to attend the General Meeting. Our SCFMS officers are elected for two-year terms, so we should not be electing new officers at the next meeting. However, we still have important business to attend to. It is probably a bit early to start planning your trip, but at least think about it.

While you are thinking about it, we need to think ahead to the conventions beyond 2024. Please consider hosting an upcoming SCFMS Convention. We have some big clubs in central and south-central Texas, and they are also in the center of the SCFMS area of responsibility. It would sure be nice if some of those clubs could host a convention. There is an SCFMS Convention Planning Guide posted on the SCFMS website on the Forms page, but a direct link is

http://www.scfms.net/forms/SCFMS_CONVENTION_PLANNING_INFO.pdf

With a little bit of innovation, a club should be able to host the convention without any additional expense to the club. You may find that your show location has enough room or a side (planning) room to host the Meeting, Breakfast with the Editors and Webmasters, and Awards dinner. Another alternative is that a local hotel, in exchange for being the designated hotel for the convention, may let you have a room for the activities. The breakfast and dinner prices should be enough for the food – but possibly a slightly higher charge to the attendees can cover any additional expenses. To help defer some of the costs, some clubs

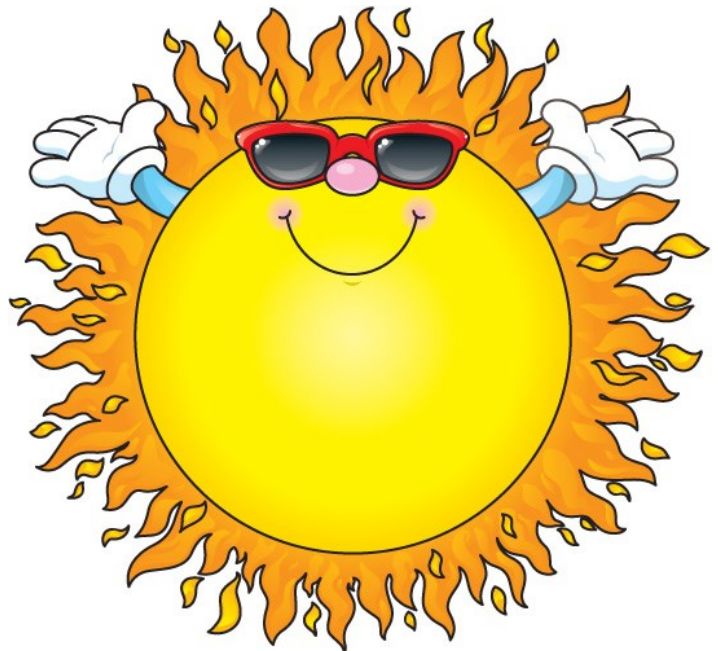
cater the breakfast themselves using member resources to prepare and serve the food. In any event, the club should be able to host the convention and activities without any additional expense to the clubs. Perhaps the SCFMS should consider helping defer any additional expenses with the convention. It could be included in the SCFMS budget, but we would need an agenda item to formalize the concept and amount at our next meeting.



*Don Shurtz,
SCFMS President*

In the January-February SCFMS Newsletter, I announced a donation matching program for club donations to the AFMS Scholarship Foundation (Fund). So far the response has been underwhelming. Only the Rollin' Rock Club and the Pleasant Oaks Gem and Mineral Club have received the one-time matching funds. I sure hope other clubs will take advantage of it. If you don't know about the program, please see the article titled "Scholarships" in the JAN-FEB 2024 SCFMS Newsletter. The newsletters are posted on the SCFMS website at <http://www.scfms.net/newsletter.htm>.

One of the responsibilities of the SCMS President is to prepare a status report for the AFMS convention. As I thought about the status of the SCFMS for the report, it was somewhat depressing. I am asking the SCFMS Newsletter Editor to include a copy of that report in this newsletter. Please look for it. The title of the report is "SCFMS President's Report for the 2024 AFMS Annual Meeting". It would sure be nice if someone could convince me that most, if not all, of the report is incorrect.



SCFMS PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE 2024 AFMS ANNUAL MEETING

Don Shurtz, SCFMS President

I would like to report that everything in the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies (SCFMS) is great. However, the fact is the SCFMS is struggling. Our membership has decreased for the last 3 years falling from 3875 members in 2022 to 3156 members in 2024. We currently have 27 due-paying clubs that bring our membership total to 3156 comprised of 2831 Adult and 325 Junior members. Since the last AFMS convention, 3 of our small clubs have folded due to dwindling membership. We have an additional 6 clubs that have not yet paid their 2024 dues. We are hoping that all 6 of the clubs will rejoin the SCFMS. If that happens our membership may approach the 2023 levels, and we will gladly pay AFMS dues for the increased membership.

In 2022 we did not have a quorum present for our convention (including those few officers and Directors/delegates at the scheduled convention and those joining by ZOOM). We ended up passing essential motions after the fact by email. As our officers serve a 2-year term, we did not need to elect officers. In 2023 at the last minute, we had to cancel our scheduled convention and switch to a ZOOM meeting convention. For our ZOOM meeting, we had a quorum and were able to elect officers and pass essential motions. Finally, it has been several years since we have been able to fill all our officer and committee positions. This year we have yet to be able to fill the Secretary and two of our District Vice President positions plus many of our Committee Chair positions, but we are still looking.

On the positive side, the SCFMS is very hopeful that we will hold a successful 2024 Convention. The Convention is being hosted by the Dallas Gem and Mineral Society (DGMS) on November 23 and 24, 2024. The Dallas location is more centrally located than our three previous convention locations and hopefully will be easier to access for the officers and board of directors (presidents or their designated representative from each member society) than recent conventions. We do not yet have clubs offering to host the 2025 and beyond conventions.

At our October 2023 ZOOM convention, we were able to elect officers for 2-year terms that run from January 1, 2024, until December 31, 2025. The officers for 2024 – 2025 are:

Officers:

President	Don Shurtz
Vice President	Sigrid Stewart
Secretary	Vacant

Executive Secretary*	Liz Burford
Treasurer	Henry Rojas
District I Vice President (NE TX)	Eddie Harmon
District II Vice President (SE TX)	Vacant
District III Vice President (S TX)	Wendy Crook-Abelo
District IV Vice President (Central TX)	Ron Carman
District V Vice President (W TX)	Vacant
District VI Vice President (Rollin' Rock Club)	Betty Gosewehr
District VII Vice President (AR)	Raymond Lynch
District VIII Vice President (LA)	Del Glasner

*Appointed and Paid position

Contact information for officers can be found on the SCFMS Website, www.scfms.net.

The SCFMS has a mandatory liability insurance program for all clubs. Over the last several years our insurance agent has found a less expensive policy which has allowed us to decrease the pass-through insurance cost to member clubs. The SCFMS also has a mandatory Sexual Harassment Policy. In the last year, we have only had one instance of activities that were out of line with the Policy. The Policy led to a satisfactory resolution of the incident. However, this incident pointed out a need to modify our Policy to include retaliation activities. These modifications will be presented for approval at our 2024 Convention.

As I mentioned in the beginning, I do not believe the health of the SCFMS is great. We have problems with losing clubs, losing members, and a general sense that individual clubs and members love rock-hounding and shows, but that the members have little interest in volunteering to sustain the individual clubs and the SCFMS. Finding candidates to run for club and federation officer positions is, at best, difficult. I am not sure what can turn this situation around but will continue to strive to find that spark that will bring our clubs and federation to a more active status.

Very Respectfully

Don Shurtz

March 24, 2024

THE LOVE STORY EMBEDDED IN THE CARMEN LÚCIA RUBY

by Ken Rock, MSDC Editor



The 23.1-carat stone is the largest faceted ruby in the National Gem Collection and one of the finest large faceted Burmese rubies known. The stone, set in a platinum ring with diamonds, was obtained with funds donated to the museum by Peter Buck in memory of his wife.

Judging by the crowds, one of the most popular gems on display at the Smithsonian's Geology, Gems, and Mineral Hall is the 23.1 carat Carmen Lúcia ruby that is the largest faceted ruby in the National Gem Collection and one of the finest large, faceted Burmese rubies known. Like many of the donated gemstones and jewelry on display, the story behind the donated gem has an interesting history that dates back almost 60 years, to 1965 when a 17-year-old college student named Fred DeLuca sought advice from family friend, Dr. Peter Buck, on how to pay his college tuition at the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut. Buck, who was then working for General Electric designing nuclear power plants, answered: open a sandwich shop.

As a volunteer in the Geology, Gems, and Mineral Hall of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), I meet people from all over the world who have come to see the amazing collection of gemstones, minerals, and meteorites and to learn about topics such as mining, minerals used in our daily lives, plate tectonics, and our solar system. Most visitors begin their tour with a stop at the Hope Diamond which is on display in a special case that rotates the necklace to all four sides for people to take photos and contemplate what may be the world's most well-known diamond.

Equally impressive to me, however, is the strong interest people have in the adjacent gallery which displays many famous and historically significant gemstones and jewelry, many of which are donations. Judging by the crowds, one of the most popular gems on display is the 23.1 carat Carmen Lúcia ruby that is the largest faceted ruby in the National Gem Collection and one of

the finest large, faceted Burmese rubies known. This gemstone is featured in Dr. Jeff Post's book [Unearthed, Surprising Stories Behind the Jewels](#), published in 2023, that highlights some exceptional gems from the Smithsonian's National Gem Collection. As Dr. Post notes in his comments:

"The ruby is exceptional because of its size, richly saturated homogeneous red color, and outstanding transparency. It was mined from the fabled Mogok region of Burma in the 1930s... and is set into a platinum ring flanked by triangular-shaped diamonds."

Pete's Super Submarines

Little could Fred DeLuca or Peter Buck imagine that the partnership they established in 1965 would ultimately change the landscape of the fast-food industry. DeLuca honored his benefactor by naming the shop "Pete's Super Submarines" with the priciest sandwich selling for 69 cents. They later formed Doctor's Associates Inc. to oversee operations of the restaurants as the franchise expanded. The holding company derived its name from DeLuca's goal to earn enough from the business to pay tuition for medical school, as well as Buck's having a doctorate in physics. In 1968, the sandwich shop was renamed Subway. Although Dr. Buck said that "We didn't make a profit for 15 years," their decision to turn their sandwich shop into a chain by franchising was a move that would eventually make both of them billionaires.



That single original store has since grown into the mammoth Subway chain, with 37,000 restaurants in more than 100 countries. Only McDonald's has more restaurants worldwide (about 40,000). The \$1,000 investment by the late Dr. Peter Buck has got to be one of the most lucrative investments in U.S. history.

Peter Buck's a-ha moment for the sandwich business occurred, he said, when he was a boy in Portland, Maine. He worked as a laborer in the vegetable fields,

Continued from Page 6



Peter Buck with Sandwich. Photo by Getty Images. Peter Buck, Co-founder of Subway, died in 2021 at the age of 91.

making 20 cents an hour. On occasion, his family would dine on Italian sandwiches made at a place called Amato's. The long line out of the door and the diamond rings and gold bracelets of the women behind the counter "impressed a little boy," said Dr. Buck. Thus, it's not too surprising that jewels became one of many outlets for Dr. Buck's philanthropy, which leads us to the gemstone part of the story...

The Ruby Ring

Since 2004, visitors to the National Gem and Mineral Collection at the NMNH have marveled at the Carmen Lúcia Ruby. Prominently displayed in the showcase titled "Rubies and Sapphires," the gem has the distinction of being the largest faceted ruby in the collection and one of the finest Burmese rubies ever known.

The Carmen Lúcia Ruby is named for Carmen Lúcia Buck, the beloved second wife of Dr. Buck, who provided the funds for the Smithsonian to purchase the stone after her passing in 2003. Born in Brazil, Carmen was a collector of jewels as well as a philanthropist dedicated to medical research, the elderly, and children in her home county. She had learned of the ruby from jeweler Frank Capiello of Danbury, CN, who, in 2002, had heard that it might be coming on the market after many years in private hands.



Carmen Lúcia Buck. Photo is a screen capture from a YouTube video, "[Gems of the Smithsonian](#)."

Carmen had been undergoing treatments for colon cancer in 2002 and had seen photos of the magnificent ruby. She had hoped to purchase the ring to celebrate her recovery. Sadly, she would never wear it and, in fact, never got to see the actual stone. Instead, in a great act of love

and honor for the memory of his wife, Dr. Buck would gift the Carmen Lúcia Ruby to the American people with the assurance that it would go on permanent display.

"So it seemed like a really appropriate thing to do, to give it to the nation so people could come and see it," he told *The New York Times* in 2004. "She would have really liked that people could see it and know it was the Carmen Lúcia Ruby, and that it wasn't locked away in a vault somewhere."

At the time, National Gem and Mineral Collection curator Jeffrey Post called the Carmen Lúcia Ruby "the most important addition to the collection in the 20 years that I've been here."

Sourced in the fabled Mogok region of Burma (now Myanmar) in the 1930s, the Carmen Lúcia Ruby displays a richly saturated red color with undertones of pink and purple, a coveted hue known to gem experts as "[pigeon blood red](#)." The 23.1 carat oval-cut stone is set in a platinum ring and flanked by two trillion-cut white diamonds weighing a combined 2.38 carats.

Peter Buck never disclosed how much he donated to the Smithsonian to purchase the ruby. We do know, however, that a similar stone — the 25.59-carat Sunrise Ruby — established a new world record for the highest price ever paid at auction for a ruby when it yielded \$30.3 million at Sotheby's Geneva in May of 2015.

But the true value of the ring, as is often the case with such items, its value, lies more in its meaning than in dollars. As an expression of the abiding love of a man for a woman, the Carmen Lucia ruby ring should sparkle for all who see it in the years ahead. Buck told Smithsonian magazine for the February 2005 issue that "Already, the ring has probably been seen by more people than had seen it altogether since it was first unearthed in the 1930s."

Provenance Largely Unknown

Regrettably, an online search does not provide results that identify who owned the Carmen Lúcia ruby before it was sold to the Smithsonian. However, as former curator Jeff Post has pointed out, "it's not so unusual to have remarkable stones remain for generations in private family vaults. When such a treasure surfaces," Post said, "it causes a major stir in the gem world."

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Below are some highlights of what we do know about the provenance of the stone:

- The ruby was mined in the Mogok region of Burma (now Myanmar) in the 1930s.
- After being mined and cut, the ruby remained in private hands for many years before surfacing on the market around 15 years prior to its acquisition by the Smithsonian in 2004.
- International gem dealers bought the ruby around 15 years before 2004, but its provenance and ownership history before that is unclear. "We don't know who owned the stone before international gem dealers bought it 15 years ago."

So, in summary, while the specific previous owner(s) are not named, we do know that the Carmen Lucia ruby was privately owned, likely by a wealthy family, for decades after being mined in the 1930s until being sold to international gem dealers around 1989. Its ownership trail before then is unknown.

For Your Visit to the Geology, Gems, and Mineral Hall

The Carmen Lúcia Ruby can be seen near the Hope Diamond and Logan Sapphire at the Janet Annenberg Hooker Hall of Geology, Gems and Minerals in the Smithsonian's Natural History Museum. It's not as big as the famed Hope Diamond or some other stones but it is about as big as rubies get, according to Dr. Post.

The bright light reflected from the faceted ruby and the adjacent natural ruby on matrix specimen easily draws attention away from the larger sapphire that is displayed nearby. The two types of stone are displayed together because they are essentially the same material – corundum, or aluminum oxide. The ruby gets its red color from traces of chromium, while other materials, such as

iron and titanium, give the sapphire its usual blue color. Curiously, only a few hundredths of a percent of iron and titanium can cause the color, and the more iron the corundum contains, the darker the blue.

Dr. Post also noted that some large red gems are on display in various collections labeled rubies, but many of them are actually spinels, a different type of stone that is also red. While rubies are aluminum oxide, spinels are magnesium aluminum oxide. Spinel look like rubies and attracted much interest in the past because they tend to be larger, he said.

Sources

[The Natural Ruby Company, Famous Rubies of the World](#)

[Carmen Lúcia Ruby - Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History](#)

[Billionaire a real gem as Smithsonian donor - The Columbus Dispatch](#)

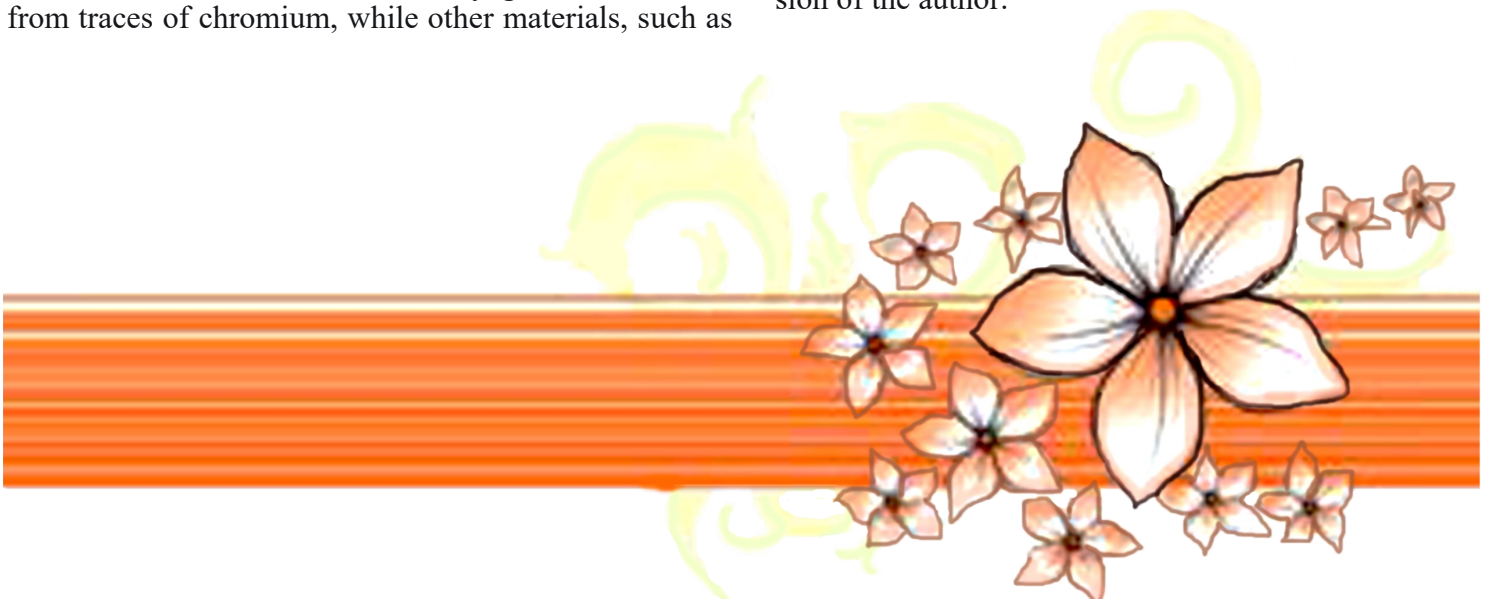
Owen Edwards, Smithsonian Magazine, [Romance and the Stone](#). February 2005.

Jeffrey Edward Post, Unearthed, The Smithsonian National Gem Collection, Surprising Stories behind the Jewels, 2021.

The Jeweler Blog, [23-Carat Carmen Lúcia Ruby Is One of the World's Most Extraordinary Examples of July's Birthstone](#), July 10, 2017.

Melanie Grayce West, The Wall Street Journal, [Subway Restaurant Founder Donates \\$30 Million to Support Danbury Hospital](#), June 19, 2014.

Via Mineral Minutes June 2024, shared with permission of the author.



CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME!

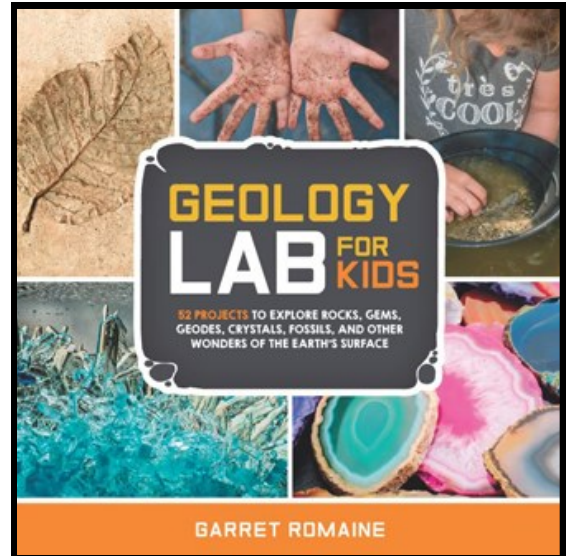
SCFMS exists for the benefit of our member clubs and we are all volunteers. Please consider enriching our club by making a photo, drawing, or written contribution to the newsletter about a geology or earth science related topic.

Pick a topic that interests you and give it a go. Please send it me at scfm-seditor@yahoo.com by the 25th of the month prior to the expected publication date and I would be glad to work with you to finalize your item for the newsletter.

Please, be sure to send me your show flyer at least several months in advance so, I can share it in our newsletter.

Susan Burch, Editor

**DEADLINE
FOR THE
JULY-AUGUST, 2024
NEWSLETTER IS
JUNE 25, 2024**



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<https://www.amazon.com/Garret-Romaine/e/B0037187T8>

LAB
23

SNAKY SCHIST

If sedimentary rocks are generally flat when they are laid down, how did they get so wavy?

MATERIALS

- 4 slices of yellow cheddar cheese at room temperature
- 4 slices of white cheddar cheese at room temperature



Safety Tips

Don't make a mess with your cheese, but in this lab, it's okay to play with your food!

Continued on Page 10

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PROTOCOL

STEP 1: Take your slices of cheese from the refrigerator. Alternate colors of cheese to neatly stack five slices. Push the edges slightly so a rise appears in the middle. This is an anticline. If the bulge dipped down, you would have a syncline.

STEP 2: Take your stack apart and put three slices into one neat pile and the other two, plus one new slice, into another. Put the second stack in the refrigerator.

STEP 3: Holding the edges straight, make folds in the cheese by pushing the edges together a little bit at a time. You should see a mound form much easier this time. See how far it can bend without breaking.

STEP 4: Remove the second stack from the refrigerator and immediately repeat the experiment. Don't let the cheese warm up.

STEP 5: Make cheese sandwiches from your leftovers. Making grilled cheese sandwiches will turn the cheese into a metamorphic rock!



Creative Enrichment

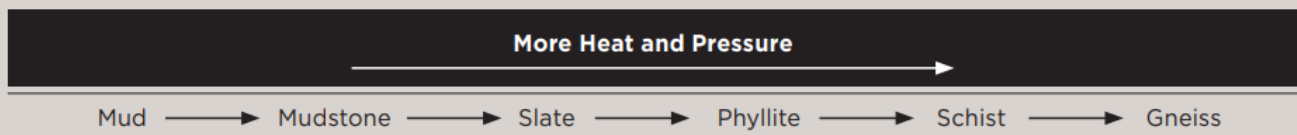
1. Use a thermometer to record the actual temperature of your cheese samples.
2. What would happen if you spread mayonnaise between your layers before you start folding?
3. Try freezing your cheese and see if you can make a single fold. Some rocks are so brittle they don't fold—they fracture.

THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE FUN

When layers of rock get buried at great depths, they stop acting like rocks and start acting like, well, melted cheese. You can see how much easier it is to create folds when there is plenty of heat, because the cheese was much easier to bend. As the heat increases, you can almost fold your cheese layers like an accordion.

It should be easier for you to understand what happens not only to rocks the size of your cheese sample, but also to giant slabs of rocks that are heated up and

pushed around. Geologists can tell how much heat and pressure a rock has been through by the minerals they find. If a rock gets more heat and pressure, it will become a slate, a common metamorphic rock. It may have started out as a mudstone but has hardly undergone any metamorphism. The next step is phyllite, and then schist. Finally, the rocks become gneiss, which is very hard.



Dear junior rockhound club leaders,

We have now published three issues of *Crack the News*, an American Federation newsletter for kids and teens written by kids and teens. These newsletters are available at <https://www.juniors.amfed.org/juniors-newsletter>. Be sure to distribute the newsletters to the members in your juniors club, so they can enjoy the articles written by other kids and teens.

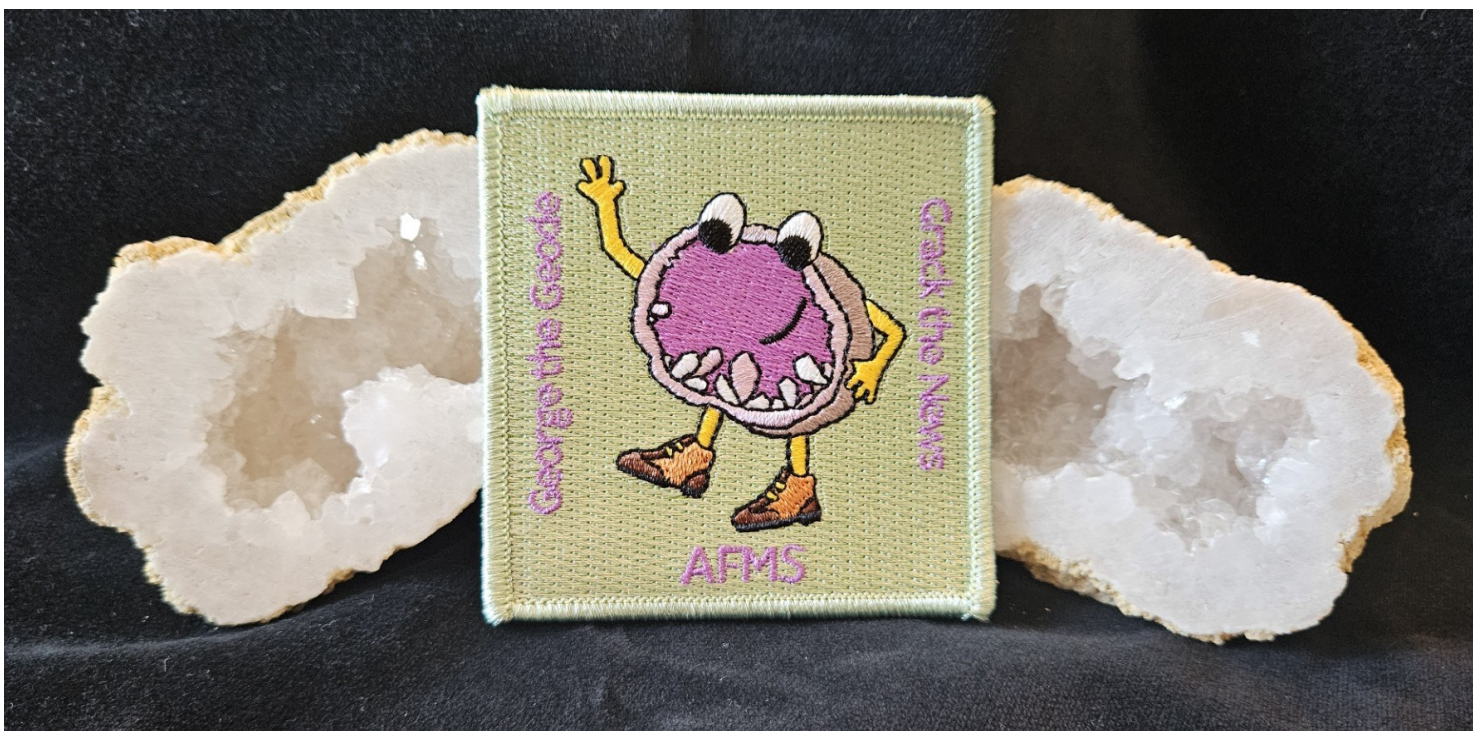
We are now gathering articles and other items for the next edition. Please encourage your junior writers, poets, photographers, and artists to contribute to the next *Crack the News*. It could be an article about one of their favorite rocks, minerals, or fossils. Perhaps an article with photos of one of their favorite collecting spots. Maybe they would like to show off lapidary jewelry they made. Or, they may have created poetry or artwork about rocks, minerals, or fossils. The only requirements are that they must be under 18 years of age, their contribution must be related to rockhounding, geology, paleontology, or the lapidary arts, and it must be created by them. It is fine if their article or other contributions have been published in your club's newsletter.

To submit their work, have their parent complete the submission form at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KiCMzmZT82fxuiIT-Ut4gqz9W4zUeXy4/view> and return it with their work to youth@amfed.org. Please submit their written work as a Word document or .pdf and artwork should be submitted as a .jpg or .pdf. If their contribution has been published in your club's newsletter, please let us know.

Thanks,
Dennis Gertenbach
Crack the News Editor

Every writer, artist, photographer or poet published in *Crack the News* earns a George the Geode patch! If you are published 5 times, you earn the geode George is standing on! Be sure to call, text, or email with any questions.

Lora Hall
AFMS Junior Programs Chair
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406-370-1863



Puzzle on Page 11

SOLUTION

ROCKHOONDING 101

ROFLOTETAWS

LOTS OF WATER

EUNLTEPREGLB

BUG REPELLENT

RTEOWL

TROWEL

KTSCUBE

BUCKETS

TPOSEAPLWER

PAPER TOWELS

PSWPAENER

NEWSPAPER

EUCRSENN

SUNSCREEN

NIINDORRSKCFUHENDO

ROCKHOONDING FRIENDS

ACOLONIT

LOCATION

NESENROLNIPSWAIRD

LANDOWNERS PERMISSION

UTQRAZ

QUARTZ

EGATA

AGATE

IOROTPIWDEDEF

PETRIFIED WOOD

LSFSSIO

FOSSILS

ETLEAVEIR

LEAVERITE

TERASUER

TREASURE

NOW YOU ARE READY TO

GO ROCKHOONDING!



Geologist

noun / ge ol o gist / [jee-ol-uh-jist]

The Other Kind Of Rock Star

UPCOMING SHOWS 2024

August 10-11, Baton Rouge G&MS, Lamar Dixon Expo Center,
Gonzales, LA, brgem.min.input@gmail.com

August 17-18, ARK-LA-TEX G&MS, Bossier City Civic Center,
Bossier City, LA, larockclub@gmail.com

Source: Chips and Chatter, June 2024



**THANK
YOU**

To those who helped make this issue possible...

Don Shurtz

Ken Rock

Garret Romaine

Dennis Gertenbach

Lora Hall