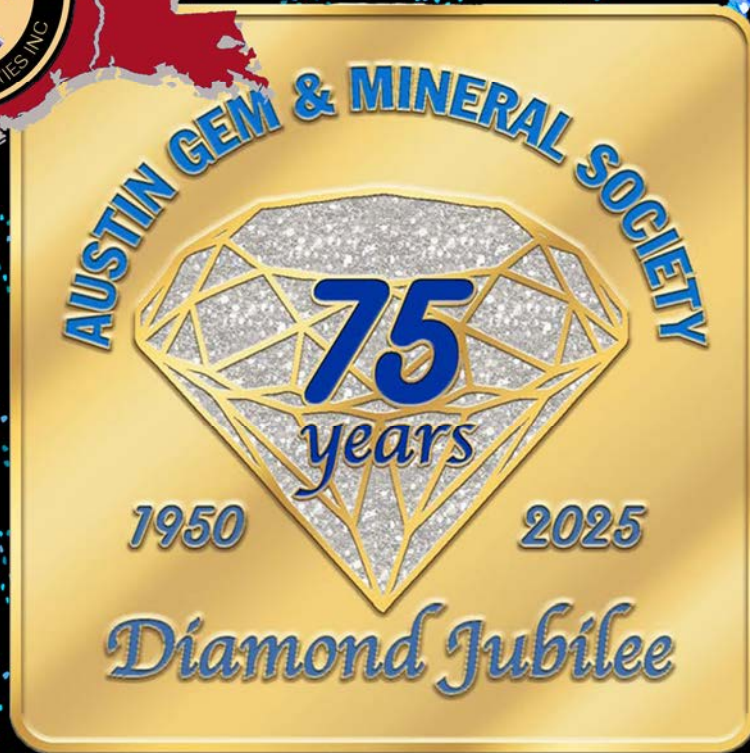


SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 2025

# NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION Of Mineral Societies



**Annual Gem, Mineral, and Jewelry Show:**

**GEM CAPERS**  
**October 17-19, 2025**

**Hosting the SCFMS Editors and Authors Breakfast,  
Annual Meeting, along with the Awards Dinner Oct. 18**

**Member of: The American Federation of Mineral Societies**

Austin Gem & Mineral Society  
Gem, Jewelry & Mineral Show

# GEM CAPERS

OCTOBER 17-19, 2025

Palmer Events Center  
900 Barton Springs Rd  
Austin, TX



Show Theme:  
**DIAMOND**

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## SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.

### 2025 SCFMS OFFICERS

**President: Don Shurtz**

**Executive V-P: Sigrid Stewart**

**Secretary: Vacant**

**Treasurer: Henry Rojas**

**Web Master: Don Shurtz**

**Exec. Secretary: Susan Burch**

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

**SCFMS Endowment Fund  
Treasurer: Walt Beneze**

**Nominating Committee –  
Ron Carman**

**Past President: Roger Burford**

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

[scfmsinformation@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:scfmseditor@yahoo.com)

**NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED  
BIMONTHLY**

### DUPLICATION

In most instances material in this newsletter may be duplicated for non-commercial purposes providing full credit is given. There are exceptions, please do not assume permissions. For Commercial use, the individual author(s) must be contacted for their approval.

### A NOTE FROM —THE EDITOR—

### THE FINAL DEAD- LINE, ETC.



For each newsletter the deadline is the 25th 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, send me a text, but send newsletter content via email.

### ANNUAL SHOW 2025

Hosted by the AGMS  
**OCTOBER 17-19, 2025**  
AUSTIN, TX

### ANNUAL MEETING

**OCTOBER 18, 2025**

**SCFMS WEB-SITE:**  
[WWW.SCFMS.NET](http://WWW.SCFMS.NET)

The SCFMS is a member of the American Federation of Mineral Societies. [amfed.org](http://amfed.org)

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR/BEAC:**

Susan Burch

[scfmseditor@yahoo.com](mailto:scfmseditor@yahoo.com)





Time really flies when you are having fun. It also flies when you are so far behind that it seems impossible to catch up. One of these statements applies, and it isn't the first one. I really don't know why I am so far behind on routine items – it could be the weather (HOT, HOT, and HOTTER) or it could be that I'm just getting old and my body is slowing down, but my mind just hasn't figured that out yet.

Our SCFMS Secretary and District V Vice President (Becky and Kris Copenhagen) have resigned. I wish Becky and Kris the best in resolving their unforeseen circumstances and hope they can again volunteer with the SCFMS at a future date. We really need a Secretary for the SCFMS Annual Meeting and beyond. I will again do my best to hold down both the President and Secretary positions until the Secretary position is filled.

Here we are, about 2 months from the SCFMS Convention in Austin. I am looking forward to the Annual Meeting – my last as the SCFMS President. I kept thinking that being the Executive Vice President and then the President would be easy. It really isn't hard, but that doesn't keep me from being stressed out. I am excited that we are going to have a Convention somewhere near the middle of the SCFMS area of responsibility – perhaps we will have really great attendance. The Austin Gem and Mineral Society is having its show, Gem Capers, from October 17 – 19 in downtown Austin at the Palmer Event Center. All convention activities will be on October 18 in areas north of downtown Austin. The same weekend, Austin is hosting a Formula 1 race in the downtown area. There are only two Formula 1 races in the United States in 2025 – Austin in October and Las Vegas in November. There will be huge crowds for both races, and hotels will be packed. The average hotel cost in downtown Austin on the weekend of 17 – 19 October will be over \$300.00 per night. Fortunately, Austin has a clubhouse in the northern part of Austin, well away from the Formula 1 Race Activities. Hotel prices will be considerably less expensive.

As a reminder, every SCFMS club should have a representative at the Annual Meeting. The Board of Directors of the SCFMS is constituted by SCFMS elected officers and the President of each society/club. Every member of the Board of Directors is required to attend the annual meeting. Somewhere along the line, the term Delegate was used as an alternate name for the club/society's representative attending the annual meeting, and a Delegate Form was developed for each club to name its representative. That Delegate should be the society/club's President. However, if the President is unable to attend, an alternate may be designated. The Delegate form should be submitted by every club – the Delegate should be the club/society's President or designated representative. The Form is due 30 days before the annual meeting.

This is the time of the year when forms are due. There are forms for attending the Annual Meeting, and other forms about SCFMS Membership. The forms listed below are all available on the SCFMS website. In addition, copies of all the forms except the Insurance Coverage Request are included in this issue of the SCFMS Newsletter. Here is a listing of forms and their due date:

#### SCFMS forms:

- ♦ 2025-2026 Dues and Insurance Form, due September 30, 2025
- ♦ 2025-2026 Officer Form, due whenever club officers are elected, no later than February 1, 2026.
- ♦ Insurance Coverage Request Form, due at least two weeks before the planned event.

#### Annual Meeting forms:

2025 AGMS-SCFMS-Registration-Packet includes:

- ♦ Meeting Registration Form due October 1, 2025
- ♦ Application to Exhibit Form, due October 1, 2025
- ♦ 2025 SCFMS Convention Delegate Form, due September 18, 2025



**2025 WEBSITE CONTEST****Don Shurtz, SCFMS Website Contest Chair**

*Don Shurtz,  
SCFMS Website  
Contest Chair / President*

Short and Simple: **Entries to the 2025 SCFMS Website Contest are due September 30, 2025.** This includes both competitive and non-competitive entries (see the July-August 2025 SCFMS Newsletter). To enter, use the link to the AFMS Website,

[AFMS - Website Contest](#)

**2026 SCFMS CONVENTION****Don Shurtz, SCFMS President**

The 2025 SCFMS Convention is happening in October. This Convention is being hosted by the Austin Gem and Mineral Club in conjunction with their show. The show is in downtown Austin and competing with one of two Formula 1 Car Races held in the United States. The convention activities will be well away from downtown Austin, where hotel rates start at \$300.00 per night.

HOWEVER, it is time to start thinking about the 2026 (and beyond) Convention. I would ask each club to consider hosting a future SCFMS convention. It is desirable but not required to have the Convention in conjunction with a club show. It is also desirable but not required that the Convention be in the second half of the year. Keep in mind that the SCFMS now has \$300.00 to reimburse the club for out-of-pocket expenses directly related to hosting a Convention. Finally, another thought to keep in the background – the SCFMS will again be hosting the AFMS Convention in 2029. There could be a considerable number of clubs wanting to host the 2029 SCFMS and AFMS Conventions. Now would not be a bad time to submit a bid.

If you are interested in hosting an upcoming convention, please let Sigrid Stewart or me know. Our emails can be found on the SCFMS Officer and Committee page. If you want more information about hosting an SCFMS or AFMS convention, please check out the SCFMS Convention Planning Information on the Members/Forms page of the SCFMS Website, [www.scfms.net/forms\\_members.htm](http://www.scfms.net/forms_members.htm).

**AGMS Welcomes SCFMS!****John Connors, AGMS President**

Join Austin Gem and Mineral Society and the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies for a fun Fall weekend in beautiful Austin, Texas October 17-19. We have lined up a series of special events for our meeting this year!

Registration forms and full details are online at [AGMS-TX.Org](http://AGMS-TX.Org).

**Event Schedule**

The Austin Gem & Mineral Society (AGMS) is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2025, marking three-quarters of a century dedicated to the education, appreciation, and preservation of the earth sciences. To honor this milestone, the Society proudly announces its *Diamond Jubilee*—a radiant theme that will headline this year's *Gem Capers* show, taking place October 17-19 at the Palmer Events Center in Austin, Texas.

**GEM CAPERS** – The Austin Gem and Mineral Society's annual gem and mineral show is held at the Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road in Austin, Texas. The 2025 event hosts over 30 vendors selling gemstones, jewelry, beads, mineral specimens, fossils, crystals and more! Admission is Free with your SCFMS Registration. Show opens at 9:00 AM Friday and Saturday and 10:00 AM on Sunday.

**EDITOR'S BREAKFAST** – 8:00 AM Saturday, AGMS Clubhouse, 6719 Burnet Lane - Open to all, this meeting highlights our Editors and Webmasters, presents an interesting speaker, and awards for journalistic excellence. Catered by Kerby Lane. Cost \$27.

**SHUTTLE SERVICE** – Shuttle runs between AGMS and the Palmer Events Center from 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM. FREE.

**SCFMS ANNUAL MEETING** – 2:00 PM, AGMS Clubhouse, 6719 Burnet Lane – FREE - Open to all. The Society's annual get-together and business meeting. Updates on activities, policies, and finances. Election of officers for 2026.

**SCFMS AWARDS DINNER and RECEPTION** – 6:00 PM Reception, 7:00 PM Dinner – Nature's Treasures, 11055 N. IH 35, AUSTIN. Enjoy the Wonders of Nature's Treasures while enjoying a beverage and refreshments and take advantage of a generous discount on store items. Reception is FREE (sponsored by AGMS Leadership). Dinner features speaker Joann Socash, President of San Antonio club, and Awards to our member organizations. Dinner \$47.





**SCFMS BULLETIN EDITORS AND AUTHORS  
CONTEST NEWS**

Susan Burch, SCFMS BEAC

The South Central Federation of Mineral Societies 2025 Bulletin Editors and Authors Contest awards will be given during the Editor's Breakfast in Austin, Texas on October 18, 2025. Thank you to all who participated in making your club's newsletter a more informative and entertaining offering. The results will be published in the November—December issue of this newsletter.



Susan Burch,  
SCFMS BEAC

Most members seem to feel that the club's newsletter is solely the responsibility of the editor. However, this is not so. Without contributions from other club members, it is sometimes difficult as editors to keep filling the pages. Some articles are required, such as the President's Message and others are not. But, it is always appreciated, not only by the editor but by other club members when there are items submitted for your club's bulletin.

So, please encourage your membership to contribute. Some editors have had internal club contests for categories such as Poetry, Drawn Feature, etc. Also, don't hesitate to write a little something about your interest in the hobby, your latest rock find, or even a picture.

The SCFMS Bulletin Editors and Authors contest deadline for 2026 is not far off. It's always a great idea to review the judges submission forms to see what is required in our newsletters even if you don't plan on entering. The SCFMS uses the American Federation of Mineral Societies' contest forms. You can find these forms on the AFMS website at [AFMS - Bulletin and Special Publications](#)

If you feel your newsletter is not contest worthy but you wish to improve, please don't hesitate to contact me for suggestions. As the Bulletin Editor's Advisory Chair for the SCFMS, I am here to help you, whether that's to redesign your front page, suggest where to find articles, or almost anything else you might need regarding your bulletin.

The 2026 AFMS contest deadline has not been announced. However, as the combined show for the AFMS and the MWF will be in St. Charles, IL, on May 23-24. So, it is most likely that the deadline will be really early. Although, I may need to bump up the deadline once I receive information from the AFMS, I'm setting a tentative deadline for entries to be received by me:

**January 12, 2026**



# Annual Dues and Insurance are due Sept. 30, 2025

The combined membership and insurance dues form is on the next page along with being on the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies website. You will find the officer submission form on the SCFMS website at

## ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE

If you hold an office with the SCFMS, send your annual report to Don Shurtz by September 28, 2025 at [don.shurtz@gmail.com](mailto:don.shurtz@gmail.com).





THE SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL  
SOCIETIES Arkansas • Louisiana • Texas

**SCFMS Combined Dues and Insurance Form**

**Dues and Insurance Payments MUST BE RECEIVED BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2025**

**CLUB INFORMATION:**

Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Club Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTACT PERSON FOR CLUB:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCFMS MEMBERSHIP DUES & INSURANCE:**

- Use club membership count as of September 1
- Yearly adult membership is **\$4.00 (\$2.25 for dues and \$1.75 for insurance)** per adult
- Yearly junior membership is **\$2.25 (\$0.50 for dues and \$1.75 insurance)** per junior\*
- \*Junior members are those under 18 years of age on September 1
- There is a 10% late fee if payment is received after September 30
- You must download first, then fill/save/print and mail or email this completed form with a check payable to SCFMS or South Central Federation of Mineral Societies.

# of Adults: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$4.00 ea. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# of Juniors (under 18): \_\_\_\_\_ x \$2.25 ea. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Late fee 10% if received after September 30: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Dues and Insurance payment: = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ CHECK #: \_\_\_\_\_

**SEND PAYMENT TO: THE SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES**

**c/o SUSAN BURCH, SCFMS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

**10911 HOLLY SPRINGS DR., HOUSTON, TX 77042**

**\*\*To contact the Executive Secretary email: [scfmseditor@yahoo.com](mailto:scfmseditor@yahoo.com) or call 936-615-5397\*\***



**Member of the American Federation of  
Mineralogical Societies**





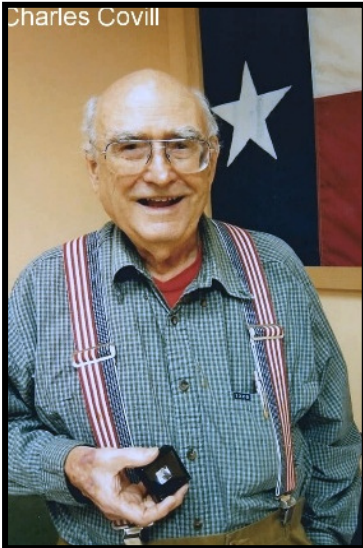
## “DIAMOND” MEANS MORE THAN 75 YEARS TO AGMS

By Jan Ozias



Austin Gem and Mineral Society is celebrating 75 years as a strong organization with a Diamond Jubilee, but there are many relationships with diamonds.

Diamond is an amazing mineral our Mineral Special Interest Group knows well. It inspires members who facet gemstones or want to learn and practice in the faceting workshop. The topic is of great interest at general meetings including speakers such as from Diamonds Direct (2017) and Charles Kirkpatrick who presented about the industry most recently in 2024.



Diamonds can be diverse as are our members' backgrounds and interests. Near perfect Diamond is treasured as a faceted gemstone with its unique luster. But imperfect diamonds are uniquely abrasive and long valued for cutting and polishing other gems.

“Synthetic diamonds” were created in the 1950s by American workers at General Electric’s “Project Superpressure” to meet industrial demands. They have had diverse industrial applications from drill bits in oil fields to speaker domes.

AGMS has long offered classes and facilities to serve members' diverse interests: the Streiber Library, a curated mineral collection, Gef Fisher “slab saw shack,” lapidary workshop for making slabs for nightlights or cabs for jewelry including wire wraps, and silversmithing and faceting workroom.

AGMS had a unique relationship with the Texas Faceters' Guild. Well-known member and instructor, Charles Covill (1920-2017) took up faceting as his “hobby” after retirement from designing bridges. Charles became an accomplished gemstone faceter, a leader and competitor in the Texas Faceters' Guild. He taught and mentored members including Ewing Evans, a retired chemist. “Wing” credits Charles for teaching and then pushing him to enter the Australian International Faceting Challenge...in which he won 1<sup>st</sup> place 4 times!

In 1988, Guild member Hubert Rackets proposed the group cut replicas of world-famous diamonds. Twelve Guild members accepted the challenge to recreate 32 famous diamonds (usually in cubic zirconia, YAG, even glass) for display. Charles cut the Nassak and Tiffany replicas. In 2002, Charles wrote *Developing a Faceting Diagram for AGMS The Stone Chipper* including how he diagramed the replica for “Star of the South.”

He and wife Paddy (1920-2009) were very active in service to AGMS- often serving as Officers. They were the club’s first named Patrons (1994). Their daughter Diann Hill continued as an active leader.

The Texas Faceters' Guild held meetings and symposia at the AGMS club house. When the Guild disbanded, the members placed the Great Diamond Replicas case on permanent loan to the AGMS. The case has been frequently displayed at Gem Capers and will be the center of attraction at the October 2025 Show for which Diamond is the theme.

Speaking of Gem Capers, have you noticed Rocky, the Show mascot? Rocky first appeared at the 2009 Show for the theme “History of Mining.” Look at what’s in his bag!



BOARD DIRECTOR  
EWING EVANS  
AT 1994 GEM AND  
MINERAL PARTY







**South Central Federation of Mineral Societies  
ARKANSAS – LOUISIANA – TEXAS**

## **Annual Meeting Information**

**The SCFMS 2025 Annual Meeting will be held in Austin, Texas on Saturday, October 18th, 2025.  
SCFMS Events:**

**Editors and Webmasters Breakfast:** 8:00 AM, AGMS Clubhouse, 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, 78757\*

**SCFMS Annual Meeting:** 2:00 PM, AGMS Clubhouse\*

**Awards Dinner:** 7:00 PM, Nature's Treasures, 11055 N IH-35, Austin 78753

**Rollin' Rock Club:** 8:00 AM, Sunday, October 19, 2025, Palmer Events Center, back corner of Exhibit Hall

**Editor's Breakfast:** \$27.00 SCFMS  
**Annual Meeting:** \$0  
**Awards Dinner:** \$40

\*Shuttle service will be provided Saturday morning between AGMS Clubhouse and Palmer Events Center for anyone wishing to attend the Gem Capers Gen and Mineral Show.

**Register online at [AGMS-TX.org](http://AGMS-TX.org) or complete attached registration form and mail to AGMS, 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX 78757**

**Lodging: Hotel/Lodging:** This is the Formula-1 Race Event weekend, so hotels in Austin are very expensive. We have blocked rooms at the Hilton Garden Hotel North of Nature's Treasures on I-35.

**Hilton Garden** 12400 N Interstate Hwy 35 Bldg. C, Austin, TX 78753  
Res. call: 512-339-3626 / Ask for Austin Gem and Mineral Society pricing 12400 N Interstate Hwy 35 Building C, Austin, TX 78753

\$129/night plus tax –  
Includes breakfast and parking  
Restaurant/bar on site  
Microwave and small fridge in rooms  
Outdoor Pool

2.4 miles from Natures Treasures

8.4 miles from AGMS

There is also the Woodspring Hotel next door to Nature's Treasures, but it does not have a restaurant or lounge and would not let us block rooms. We recommend the Hilton Garden.

**Woodspring** 11105 N Interstate 35 Frontage Rd, Austin, TX 78753

Res.: 512-837-3100 / Ask for Austin Gem and Mineral Society pricing; \$79/night plus tax –

Does not include breakfast  
Microwave and small fridge, (no dishes, pots, pans or silverware provided)  
No restaurant or pool on site

Next door to Natures Treasures 6.6 miles from AGMS

## **RV Sites:**

**Austin Lone Star** 18 miles from Nature's Treasures  
7009 S I35 Austin 78744 512-444-6322 reservations,  
2 nights approx. \$160 depending on size and type

**Emma Long Metropolitan Park** 18 miles from Nature's Treasures  
1600 City Park Rd. Austin 78730  
512-974-6797 reservations \$25 waterfront plus \$10 per vehicle fee per day.

**Old Settlers Park** 14 miles from Nature's Treasures  
3300 E Palm Valley Round Rock Texas 78665 512-388-1733 30amp is \$30 per night 50 amp is \$35 per night No reservations- first come first served so no guarantee

**McKinney Falls State Park** 18 miles from Natures Treasures  
5808 McKinney Falls Parkway Austin 78744 512-243-1643 30 amp \$20, 50 amp \$24, plus \$6 daily entrance fee per person Reserveamerica.com

# AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY

presents



## GEM CAPERS 2025 Show Theme: DIAMOND



**Palmer Events Center  
900 Barton Springs Rd.  
Austin, Texas 78704**

Friday	Saturday	Sunday
October 17 <sup>th</sup>	October 18 <sup>th</sup>	October 19 <sup>th</sup>
9:00 to 6:00	9:00 to 6:00	10:00 to 5:00

FRIDAY IS STUDENT DAY

Wheel of Fortune	Teens	(13 – 19)	2.00
Fluorescent Room	Adults		8.00
Touch Table	Seniors	(60+ )	7.00
Jewelry Making	Military		7.00
Demonstrations			

**AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.**  
**6719 Burnet Lane, Austin, TX 78757**  
**FREE MINERAL SPECIMEN with this flyer**  
**AGMS-TX.ORG**





**2025 SCFMS CONVENTION DELEGATE FORM**  
**SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.**  
**ARKANSAS - LOUISIANA - TEXAS**

**2025 DIRECTOR OR DIRECTOR DELEGATE/ALTERNATE FORM**

**SCFMS ANNUAL MEETING**

**OCTOBER 18, 2025**

**Austin G&MS Clubhouse**

**6700 Burnet Lane**

**Austin, TX 78757**

**NOTE: THIS FORM IS REQUIRED FOR EVERY DIRECTOR (CLUB/ SOCIETY PRESIDENT) AND ANY DESIGNATED DIRECTOR'S DELEGATE AND/OR ALTERNATE**

*Please fill out the form or print it clearly and return it with the requested information provided.*

**NAME OF ORGANIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SCFMS DIRECTOR (Your Club/Society President) with email address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Attending: YES      NO

*(The President of each Organization is a Director of the SCFMS)*

**DIRECTOR'S DELEGATE/ALTERNATE with email address and Organization/Officer Title:**

**SIGNATURE OF CLUB PRESIDENT DIRECTOR:**

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The information below is from the SCFMS Constitution and Bylaws regarding Delegates:**

**ARTICLE VI – BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** The board of Directors of this Federation shall be the President, Executive Vice President, eight District Vice Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the current Presidents of each member society.

**BYLAWS ARTICLE III – MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

Section 1. It shall be the responsibility of each member society to send its President (who is the Federation Director) to the annual meeting.

Section 2. If the President cannot attend, a delegate shall be appointed, and an alternate may be chosen if the member society desires.

Section 3. It shall be the responsibility of each member society to notify the Federation Secretary in writing of the names of its Director, Delegate, and/or Alternate who expects to attend the annual meeting at least thirty (30) days before the convening date of the annual meeting.

Section 4. Each member society represented at the annual meeting shall be entitled to one (1) vote.

Section 5. No proxy or absentee vote shall be accepted at the annual meeting.

Send Director/Delegate information **no later than September 18, 2025**, to Don Shurtz, SCFMS President, at [don.shurtz@gmail.com](mailto:don.shurtz@gmail.com), or mail to 4004 Dublin Rd, Allen, TX 75002



Member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies



**South Central Federation of Mineral Societies  
Arkansas – Louisiana – Texas**

**2025 Registration Form**

The South Central Federation of Mineral Societies Inc.'s 2025 Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with:

**Austin Gem and Mineral Society's 74<sup>th</sup> Annual Show  
October 17-19, 2025  
Palmer Event Center  
900 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX 78704**

**Please complete a form for each person attending**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_ **CITY** \_\_\_\_\_

**STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_ **EMAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

**CLUB/SOCIETY NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**Officer (specify)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Chairperson** \_\_\_\_\_ **Delegate** \_\_\_\_\_ **Alternate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Editor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Exhibitor** \_\_\_\_\_ **Judge** \_\_\_\_\_ **Other (specify)** \_\_\_\_\_

<u><b>Event</b></u>	<u><b>Number</b></u>	<u><b>Total</b></u>
<b>Editors/Webmaster Breakfast</b>	<b>\$27</b> _____	<b>\$</b> _____
<b>SCFMS Annual Meeting</b>	<b>\$ 0</b> _____	<b>\$</b> _____
<b>Awards Banquet</b>	<b>\$40</b> _____	<b>\$</b> _____

**Total Amount** \_\_\_\_\_ **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please email completed form to: [info@agms-tx.org](mailto:info@agms-tx.org) or mail them to:  
Austin Gem and Mineral Society, 6719 Burnet Lane, Austin TX 78757**

**Forms must be received by Wednesday, October 1, 2025  
Make checks payable to Austin Gem and Mineral Society.**



AUSTIN GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY  
SCFMS SHOW & CONVENTION  
October 17 - 19, 2025

**APPLICATION TO EXHIBIT**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ CLUB AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_

If your exhibit is non-competitive, check here \_\_\_\_\_

If a competitive entry, please include the following information:

DIVISION \_\_\_\_\_ CLASS \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP: Master    Advanced    Novice    Society    Junior    Jr. Society

If Junior, give date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

For competitive exhibits, the exhibitor should sign below:

"I hereby submit my application to exhibit and attest that all material displayed is my own property, or for lapidary or jewelry, all work was accomplished by me."

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

For competitive exhibits, an officer of the exhibitor's society must sign below:

I attest that the above named exhibitor is a member of the \_\_\_\_\_  
(society name)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Office held \_\_\_\_\_

The latest (2024) edition of the AFMS Uniform Rules will be used for judging

Check one: \_\_\_\_\_ I will need to borrow a case from the DGMS

or

\_\_\_\_\_ I have my own case, size: Length \_\_\_\_\_ depth \_\_\_\_\_ height \_\_\_\_\_

**Entry forms must be returned by October 1, 2025 to:**

Ron Carman, Austin Gem and Mineral Society  
6719 Burnet Lane  
Austin, TX 78757  
Email: AGMSaustin@gmail.com

This form may be duplicated.

## GEOLOGY LAB FOR KIDS-Garrett Romaine

UNIT  
8

# UNDERSTANDING THE EARTH

We started at the smallest scale, building up crystals and rocks and then breaking them back down. Now it's time to look at geology on a bigger scale. We live on a young planet; we know that because the continents are still moving, and volcanoes still erupt. Geologists believe that as planets get older, those forces stop. And yet it's an old planet as far as birthdays go—billions of years old. Once you can get those two ideas in your head *at the same time*, you can understand what is happening at the surface of the Earth on any given day.

In these labs, you'll get an understanding for just how old the Earth really is—measured in billions of years. Then you'll learn about some of the ways the Earth makes changes at the surface where you can see them. You'll also learn some basic geology mapping skills and how to mimic one of the most interesting geological events—the geyser.





See just how old the Earth is and how hard it is to imagine the scale.



## MATERIALS

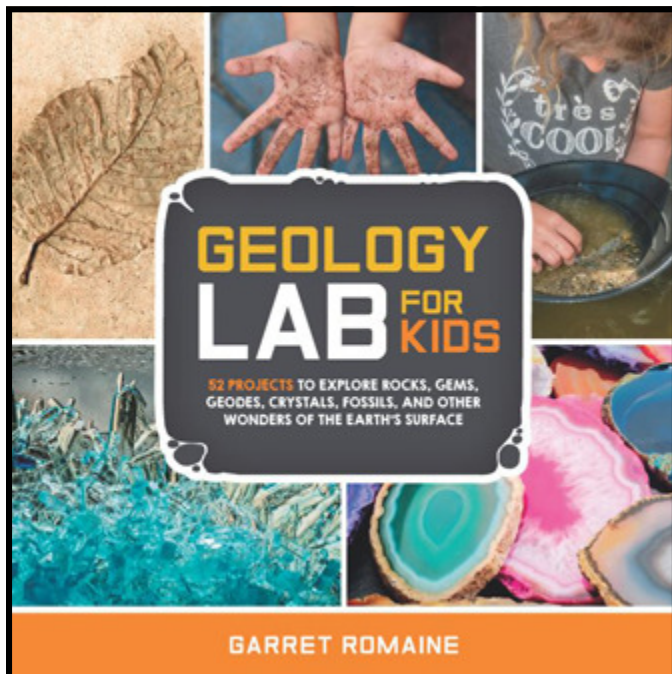
- Old deck of cards
- Glue (staples also work)
- Coloring markers

## PROTOCOL

**STEP 1:** Take an old deck of cards. Count out forty-five cards, which is all you'll need for this lab. Each card represents 100 million years, and you'll show how they correspond to the Earth's age, estimated at 4.54 billion years old.

**STEP 2:** Glue thirty-nine of those cards together into a single stack. Make it as straight as possible so the edges match up. Color these cards with brown edges. This group represents the Precambrian era—it covers the first 4 billion or so years of Earth.

**STEP 3:** Use a purple marker to color the edges of three cards. Glue them together and stack them on top of the brown cards. This represents the Paleozoic era. It lasted about 300 million years, so we round down to the nearest hundred-millionth place and use three cards.



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<https://www.amazon.com/Garret-Romaine/e/B0037I87T8>

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**STEP 4:** Use a green marker to color the edge of two cards. This is the Mesozoic era, the age of dinosaurs. It lasted about 180 million years.

**STEP 5:** You have now accounted for all the time recognized by geologists except for the last 60 million years. You can round that up to 100 million years and place one final card on the top. Color it yellow.



### Creative Enrichment

1. Can you think of a way to break up the last 60 million years to show the relation ship if humans have been on the Earth for about 4 million years?



## THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE FUN

The Earth is really old—and not much is known about the early years. Geologists have used radioactive dating to measure the oldest rock known, a gneiss located in Canada, at about 3.9 billion years. The first thirty-nine cards in your lab deck represent a time on the Earth that we don't know much about. That's the brown zone of your deck. There aren't many rocks to study, so we have to make educated guesses about what the world was like.

By the time you get to the purple and green cards, we have more fossils to study and we know a lot more about the conditions then. But what about that yellow card for the most recent time? You could start over with sixty new cards, and color them to show the divisions that geologists use for the *Cenozoic* era. The current time is called the *Quaternary* period, and it started just 11,000 years ago. If you were to use one card for the Quaternary, you'd need 6,000 cards to divide up the *Cenozoic* era!



## 1956 HISTORY

### By JAN OZIAS

NEWS LETTER  
OF  
THE TEXAS FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.  
AUSTIN, TEXAS  
MAY, 1956

Dear Fellow Rock-Hounds:

Well, it's over! That's what I wanted, wasn't it? Then why that funny feeling when I turned the Texas Federation of Mineral Societies, Inc. over to Dr. Bill Sankey? I am sure it was because I have REALLY enjoyed being President of the GRANDEST group of people in the world -- fellow rock-hounds! It was a pleasure to represent you at various times during the year, and it was especially challenging to try to put on a show equally as good if not better than those that have been held in Texas previously. I am sure I will be a better member for having been your President, and I thank you again for the confidence you placed in me by electing me. I enjoyed every minute.

I would be most ungrateful if I did not express to McBride Wilson, our genial vice president last year, my sincere thanks for his valuable assistance all during the year. Mac, as usual, you were most cooperative and helpful, and I thank you sincerely.

There is no member in the Federation who has given more service to the organization than my better half, Mildred. She has six years as secretary of the State organization to her credit -- three years when Mr. J. J. Brown was president, 2 years with Jesse Burt, and now this past year with me. I repeat the words of J. J. and Jesse, "Thank you, Mildred, for a job well done."

I am sure no State President has ever had a finer Board of Directors than I had last year, and I enjoyed working with each one. I received prompt replies to all letters sent Board members, and the Board meetings were well attended. On March 11, 1956, I called a special Board Meeting at my home here in Austin, and was more than pleased with the attendance and work accomplished. Again, on May 12, 1956, I called a Board Meeting at 9 P. M., and had all but two of the Board members present -- one sent a representative. This indicates the interest the Board members felt towards the Federation. Thank you, Board Members, for your fine cooperation and assistance.

The 1956 Show is now history, but it was a success from every standpoint! Approximately 6,000 persons from all over the United States and Mexico viewed the displays, and I have received many, many complimentary remarks since the show closed. I thank each of you for your part in making the 1956 Show such an outstanding success.

As all of you know, a good show doesn't just happen -- the members of the Lapidary Arts Guild of Austin began working and planning for the Show the day the 1955 show closed in Corpus Christi, and have worked faithfully all year.

In order that you may know who put in long hours planning for this Show, I am listing below the various show committees:

General Show Chairman	Bill Odom
Finance Chairman	Fieldon Berry
Awards, Rules, and Judges	Miss Dorothy Bauer, McBride Wilson, W. N. Branch, J. H. Rogers, and Mrs. Ione Odom

Educational Exhibits  
Publicity  
Reception  
Building  
Entertainment  
Dealer Space  
Complaints  
Exhibit Cases  
Printed Program

Emil H. Spillmann and J. J. Brown  
Mrs. Mildred K. Spillmann  
Mrs. Marie Kelley and Mrs. W. L. Darnell  
Emil H. Spillmann  
W. L. Darnell  
Bill Odom  
McBride Wilson  
Ben Petuskey  
J. H. Rogers, Joe Mikolaj, McBride Wilson,  
Mrs. Florene Branch, Ben Petuskey, and  
Mrs. Marie Kelley

Certainly the above are not the only ones who worked faithfully -- some of the others I would like to mention are Lee Burkholder, Onys Kelley, Mr. and Mrs. James Crockett, Mr. and Mrs. L. C. Donovan, Mrs. Joe Mikolaj, and the L. F. Tedfords. Incidentally, Mr. Tedford, one of our newer members, roped his good wife, his son, Chas. Richard, and his daughter, Betty Ruth, in for work on the registration desk (they're not members), and every time I passed the registration desk, one of the Tedfords was on duty! Mrs. L. C. Donovan, another non-member who was most faithful at the registration desk became so interested in our hobby that she has since joined the Lapidary Arts Guild of Austin as an apprentice craftsman.

For the first time in the history of gem and mineral shows in Texas, the Governor of our great State honored us with his presence. Governor and Mrs. Shivers came to the Show Saturday evening and were most interested in all the displays. In his inimitable manner, the Governor welcomed the visitors to Texas and stressed the importance of hobbies in our lives today. He further stated that he was amazed at the exhibits on display, and that our hobby of collecting gem stones and processing them into things of beauty should make us a very happy group of people.

Mrs. Shivers was presented with a ring set with a sky blue Texas topaz -- found, cut, and mounted by Bill Odom of Austin, and presented on behalf of the Lapidary Arts Guild of Austin by yours truly. After I had placed the ring on her finger, Mrs. Shivers said "I'm as nervous as I was when Allan placed the engagement ring on my finger."

Again, this was the first gem and mineral show in Texas to have the Mayor and the City Manager extend greetings to the visitors. Mayor Tom Miller and City Manager W. T. Williams visited the show Saturday afternoon. Both very graciously welcomed the visitors to Austin, and spent several hours viewing the many displays.

The week of May 7-13 was officially designated by Governor Shivers as GEM AND MINERAL WEEK IN TEXAS, and by Mayor Miller as GEM AND MINERAL WEEK IN AUSTIN. The Governor's official memorandum and the Mayor's proclamation were both appropriately framed together and placed at the entrance to the Show, along with the agate the Mayor chipped as he made his proclamation; however, for those who did not take the time to read them, and for those who did not attend the Show, the following are true copies:

Recently, I found a 1956 Texas Federation of Mineral Societies newsletter describing the Show held in Austin visited by the then Governor and Mayor. Notably the Atomic Energy Commission displayed radioactive specimens! This letter is being donated to the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies for historical purposes. The letter is 15 pages, so too long to include in it's entirety in the newsletter.

However, it will be on display at the upcoming Austin Gem and Mineral Society annual show and we have included a few of the pages here reduced. Be sure to come to Austin to read all of this gem.

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OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM  
BY  
ALLAN SHIVERS  
GOVERNOR OF TEXAS

AUSTIN, TEXAS

## GREETINGS:

The fascinating hobby of mineral and gem collecting and the lapidary arts ranks as the third largest in the United States and Texas has several hundred citizens actively engaged in this hobby.

Texas is fast becoming one of the nation's favorite collecting areas. The hobby of collecting gem stones and processing them into things of beauty is an activity which furnishes great pleasure and promotes character building to a vast number of our citizens.

The Texas Federation of Mineral Societies, Inc. is holding its annual gem and mineral show and convention, which will attract visitors from all over the United States, May 11-13, 1956 in Austin.

THEREFORE, I, as Governor of Texas, do hereby designate the week of May 7-13, 1956 as

GEM AND MINERAL WEEK  
in TEXAS.

In official recognition whereof, I hereby  
affix my signature this 4 day of May, 1956.

(SEAL)

s/ ALLAN SHIVERS  
Governor of Texas

## PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, The City of Austin has several hundred citizens actively engaged in the hobby of gem and mineral collecting and the lapidary arts; and

WHEREAS, interest in this hobby has increased until it now ranks third in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Texas Federation of Mineral Societies, Inc. is holding its annual gem and mineral show and convention in Austin, May 11, 12, and 13, which will attract visitors to the Capitol City from all over the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Lapidary Arts Guild of Austin will be host to this Gem and Mineral Show;

THEREFORE, I, Tom Miller, Mayor of the City of Austin, do hereby proclaim the week of May 7-13 as

## GEM AND MINERAL WEEK IN AUSTIN

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Austin to be affixed this 3rd day of May, 1956.

(SEAL)

s/ Tom Miller  
Mayor of The City of Austin

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Another distinguished visitor who enjoyed all the displays was Senor Alberto O. Chavez of Chihuahua, Chih., Mexico. As a mining engineer in Mexico, he was keenly interested in all the exhibits and spent several hours at the Show. Incidentally he returned later in the day and brought with him his wife and daughter.

With the able assistance of past president, J. J. Brown, the 1956 Show brought to Austin educational exhibits which were referred to by some of the Geology professors from the University of Texas as the best that had ever been shown in the Southwest, and all Geology students were urged to attend the Show.

Of especial interest to many were the gem stones displayed by Myron Everts of the Arthur A. Everts Co. of Dallas. This was the first Federation show Mr. Everts has attended; however, I am sincere when I say that I hope it will not be his last. His beautiful gem stones are needed at our shows in the future, and a great number of visitors came to the show just because of Mr. Everts' display. Every time I passed his display, I heard "oh" and "ahs" as persons viewed the rare pink sapphire ring (valued at \$13,000.00), the emerald cut rubellite, the black opal, the morganite, the precious topaz, and all the other gem stones in the display. Incidentally, you should have seen Mr. Everts helping Mildred arrange some of the educational exhibits on Thursday!

The display of the Atomic Energy Commission showing various types of radio active minerals used by the Commission was of great interest to the general public, and I deeply appreciate Mr. Steve Steinhauser's cooperation in arranging this display.

The Geology Department of the University of Texas can always be counted upon to assist in every way with a show in Austin, and I am grateful indeed for the interesting exhibit arranged by James Dyer with the assistance of his charming wife, Katherine. She can really carry rocks.

Mr. B. J. Keys of Worland, Wyoming sent a display of dinosaur gastroliths said to be over 100 million years old from the dinosaur beds where nearly two dozen petrified dinosaurs have been dug and shipped to Eastern Museums. Of especial interest was a large 4 1/2 pound gastrolith. Very few of this size are ever found, but Mr. Keys included it in his display to prove that Texas does not have all the big things in the world. Mr. Keys also included in his exhibit prehistoric bird gastroliths from the Big Horn Mountains in Wyoming. These were from the bird Diatryma which was a contemporary of the little four-toed horse, Rohippus.

A variety of colorful and interesting radioactive minerals, mineral specimens, meteorites and fossils were displayed by Ward's Natural Science Establishment of Rochester, N. Y.

Frogs and turtles made from Michigan Petoskey stone, as well as polished Petoskey stones were on display by Mrs. Edith H. Smith of Hicksville, Ohio.

The largest display of agatized Florida coral ever to be shown in Texas was prepared by Mildred and George Williamson of the Rock and Shell Shop, Miami, Fla. The exhibit, which weighed over 35 pounds, included polished halves of both the brain and the branch type of coral, polished slabs, and hand-made jewelry set with coral, some inlaid with azurite. A rare enhydra (coral with water enclosed) was included in the display.

Ralph Reiner of Austin, a student of the University of Texas, assisted by his wife, Jacqueline, brought 5 cases containing a general gem collection, and John Skupen of San Francisco, Calif. displayed the mosaic stone work, sometimes called "intarsia," of the members of the San Francisco Gem and Mineral Society.

Watch for a story concerning this mosaic work in GEMS AND MINERALS magazine soon.

Dr. H. H. Snook of Palm Dale, California displayed his carvings, and Prudence and Chester Brooks of Austin showed jade carvings from their very fine collection. H. H. Colley of Austin had a large display case filled with fossils of all kinds which created a great deal of interest among the fossil collectors. J. J. Brown had a lighted case of transparencies, and Mildred and I displayed some of our prize winning exhibits from previous shows.

Two societies entered displays in the non-competitive section; namely, the Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society and the Austin Gem and Mineral Society. While the Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society is an affiliated society, the display could not be entered in competition since it contained work that had been shown in Corpus Christi last year -- all work entered in competition must have been completed within the year. We appreciate the Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society adding to the Austin Show with this fine display, and especially thank Mrs. Richard Cline of Corpus Christi and her assistants who drove up early Thursday morning, arranged the display and drove back to Corpus Christi late in the afternoon. Needless to say Mr. and Mrs. Cline and many other members of this fine society returned over the week-end and were seen viewing the many exhibits. Thanks, Corpus Christi, for your assistance. A display of crystals was arranged by the members of the Austin Gem and Mineral Society; however, this could not be entered in competition since the Society is not an affiliated society.

To Bill Odom, our very fine Show Chairman, congratulations on securing a 100% sell-out in the Dealer Section. Since I am not a dealer, I do not know for sure, but I have been told that very few shows are 100% sell-outs, and I am very proud that Bill was able to secure the following 33 outstanding dealers from over the United States:

Booth	Name of Dealer	Address
1-2	A. G. Parser	New York, N. Y.
3	Rock Shop	San Francisco, Calif.
4	L. M. Stanley and Hal S. Tyler	Sanderson, Texas
5	Woodie's	Alpine, Texas
6	Rock's	San Antonio, Texas
7	Hughes Rock Haven	McAllen, Texas
8	Bob Roots	Denver, Colo.
9	Mike Walden	Austin, Texas
10	Desert Hawk	Tenabo, Nevada
11-12	R&B Art Craft	Los Angeles, Calif.
13	Ocus Stanley	Mount Ida, Ark.
14	Mineral Detector Company	Wichita Falls, Texas
15-16	G and J Minerals	Fort Worth, Texas
17-20	Odom's	Austin, Texas
21-22	Gordon's	Long Beach, Calif.
23	Western Motel	Deming, N. M.
24	Casa de Ken	Donna, Texas
25	Phares Gardens and Ross Rock Shop	Austin, Texas
26	Cy Miller	Kansas City, Mo.
27-28	Eckert Minerals	Florence, Colo.
29-30	Alta Industries	Phoenix, Ariz.

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Continued from Page 18

Booth	Name of Dealer	Address
31-32	Jesse Thomson	San Antonio, Texas
33-34	Martin's	Ann Arbor, Mich.
35	Woodward Ranch	Alpine, Texas
36	Robert Peck	Dallas, Texas
37	Shipley's	Gem Village, Colo.
38	Arthur Lawson	San Antonio, Texas
39-40	Mueller's	Phoenix, Ariz.
41-42	Murphy's	San Antonio, Texas
43	Rockhound Shop	Tucson, Ariz.
44	Ruth Harding Ward	West Fork, Ark.
45	Castle Hills Rock Shop	San Antonio, Texas
46-48	Alamo Rock Shop	San Antonio, Texas

I am sorry, Mr. Dealer, that "show business" kept Mildred and me from visiting with you and looking over your material. We are doubly sorry because when the Show closed, we still had \$100. left that we had planned to spend on rocks! We'll see you in San Antonio in 1957 where we won't have a thing to do but visit and buy rocks.

The judging for the competitive exhibits began at 11 A. M. Friday, and by late afternoon, the awards were made by Miss Dorothy Bauer, Chairman of the committee. The results were as follows:

SOCIETY EXHIBITS - GENERAL LAPIDARY		
Houston Gem and Mineral Society	First	
Lapidary Arts Guild of Austin	Second	
Fort Worth Mineral Club	Third	
COMMERCIAL EXHIBITS		
The Odom's of Austin	First	
INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITS - LAPIDARY		
<u>Finished Cabochon and Corresponding Rough</u>		
Walter Beck, San Antonio	First	
Emil H. Spillmann, Austin	Second	
<u>Cabochons, All One Material</u>		
Herb L. DeWalt, Brownsville	First	
Richard Cline, Corpus Christi	Second	
Mildred K. Spillmann, Austin	Third	
Emil H. Spillmann, Austin	Special Award	
<u>Cabochons, Variety of Material</u>		
Walter Beck, San Antonio	First	
Herb L. DeWalt, Brownsville	Second	
Emil H. Spillmann, Austin	Third	

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JOIN A ZOOM ON PR THROUGH  
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Jim Brace-Thompson  
AFMS Public Relations Chair

In the past two years, I've held an annual Zoom seminar open to members of all 7 regional federations comprising the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. The first was on "Practicing Public Relations in the Age of Social Media." The second focused on "Sharing Best Practices in Public Relations." I'd like to continue the tradition with a third Zoom this coming November focused on the topic of "Public Relations through Community Involvement."



Public Relations is about more than advertising or posting your club events. It's about engaging with your community in ways that are mutually rewarding and beneficial, for instance, sharing your club's knowledge, resources, and volunteers to enhance a local school science night. Your local school and its students benefit from your knowledge and experience while your club benefits by raising its profile within the community and, potentially, attracting new family members and/or science teachers.

In what ways has your club endeavored to raise its profile through community action and involvement? Here's a chance to share your success stories and to learn from other clubs from across our varied regional federations. If you would like to join in on such a Zoom seminar, please contact me at [jbraceth@roadrunner.com](mailto:jbraceth@roadrunner.com), and I'll keep you posted when a date is scheduled.

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 [scfmseditor@yahoo.com](mailto:scfmseditor@yahoo.com) by the 20th of the month prior to the expected publication date and I would be glad to work with you to finalize your item for this 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  
NOVEMBER-  
DECEMBER, 2025  
NEWSLETTER IS  
OCTOBER 25, 2025

## BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH

## TESTING FOR SILVER

Often you need to identify some of those unknown "silvery" pieces of metal in the bottom of the toolbox or some piece of old jewelry that isn't hall-marked.

Is it silver? - or is it something else?

Of course, if you need to know exactly what you have, it's best to send your metals off for refining. But inexpensive silver testing solutions can be used to help distinguish higher silver content alloys from alloys that have the same appearance but with little to no silver content, like German Silver or Nickel.

I purchased a half-ounce bottle of JSP Silver Testing Solution #GT41. It's not a rigorous analytic test, but it lets you know if you're on the right track. And it's inexpensive. Mine was only \$3.

With a fresh solution you have an instant reaction after applying it to the metal being tested. The procedure is simple - apply a small drop and watch for a color change. Note that the acid will leave a slight mark, so choose a spot that is out of the way or will be easy to polish.

If you suspect the object is silver plated, you should file a little notch somewhere inconspicuous to expose what metal is below the surface. Otherwise, all you test will be the surface plating.

Here's the reaction I got when testing various materials:

. Fine silver . . . . .	Red/Orange
. Sterling silver . . . . .	Brick Red
. 80% silver 20% copper .	Dark red changing to gray
. Brass . . . . .	Yellow changing to blue
. Nickel . . . . .	Gray-green
. Copper . . . . .	Yellow changing to blue
. Steel . . . . .	Black
. Stainless Steel . . . . .	No color change

Fine silver	Red/Orange
Sterling silver	Brick Red
80% silver 20% copper	Dark red changing to gray
Brass	Yellow changing to blue
Nickel	Gray-green
Copper	Yellow changing to blue
Steel	Black
Stainless Steel	No color change

Caution - If you do any of this testing, know that you are handling a reasonably strong acid. The

GT41 label says it includes nitric acid and potassium dichromate.

Wear safety glasses.

Do not get any testing solution on your skin.

Use a solution of baking soda and water to neutralize acid.

Wash and clean up well when you're done.



## REMOVING SOLDER FROM A BEZEL

Sometimes when you solder a bezel to a base plate you end up with excess solder that needs to be removed before setting the stone. My choice of a tool bit for this is an "Inverse Cone" bur used in a motor tool or flexshaft.



## DO BEZELS SHRINK

The engineer in me says there's no reason a bezel should shrink when I solder it onto a base plate, but I sometimes find that the stone won't quite fit into the bezel that was perfect just before soldering.

If that ever happens to you, here's a fix that usually works for those times when there's just a minor problem. I file or sand the stone down a little around its base. For soft cabs like Turquoise, Lapis, Jet or Howlite, you can use a sanding stick. Harder cabs like jasper or agates will require a diamond file. In a pinch, a ruby nail file from the drug store will work.

There are two important things to remember when doing this. First, you can only make a minor adjustment to the stone's size. All filing or sanding has to be hidden by the bezel because it takes the polish off the stone.

Secondly, remember to round off all sharp edges on the bottom of the stone. A sharp edge here might sit on a little extra solder at the bottom joint of your bezel. Any problem with the fit in this area might break the stone as you burnish the bezel down onto it.

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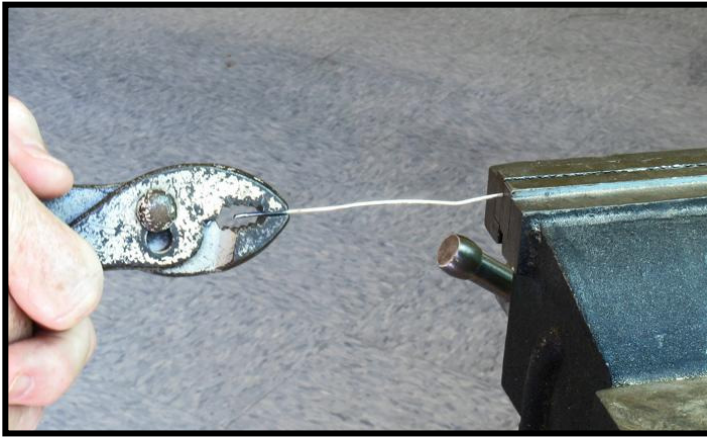
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**STRAIGHTENING WIRE**

Have you ever reached for your silver wire only to find that it's all bent up? The easiest way I've found to straighten it out is to stretch it a bit.

Simply put one end in the bench vise and grab the other end with a pair of serrated tip pliers. Then pull just enough to feel the wire stretch like a rubber band. This works best on smaller wire diameters, up to about 16 ga.

Be careful if you are trying to pull hard on a thick wire. Brace yourself in case the wire breaks or pulls out of the pliers.



There's hundreds of different tool tips for your Dremel or Foredom. Get Brad's guide on choosing the best one for the job at [amazon.com/dp/B074LG35ZV](https://amazon.com/dp/B074LG35ZV)

Making jewelry involves a multitude of skills, intricate hand work, and a lot of problem solving. In this book series find help to:

- Broaden your metalworking skills
- Improve productivity at the bench
- Save money on tools and supplies

See Other Tips in my Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making Problems

<http://amazon.com/dp/B0BQ8YVLTJ>

[BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com](mailto:BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com)

Happy hammering,  
- Brad Smith

**JUNIOR ENGAGEMENT**

**Erin Irwin, SCFMS JUNIOR CHAIR**  
[juniors@lubbockgemandmineral.org](mailto:juniors@lubbockgemandmineral.org)

As a Junior Coordinator, I know sometimes funds can be scarce to pay for activities and supplies for our junior's activities. One thing my club has been doing for our Juniors is to have a Rock Raffle. At each meeting, we sell tickets at 25 cents each or five for a dollar. We have 5 or 6 collections of four to five rocks or slabs. We call out numbers and the kids can pick one of the collections of rocks. These rocks and slabs have been donated from our club's collection or my personal collection. The kids love winning and these rocks and slabs add to their collections and our Juniors program earns money for supplies. In addition, fundraising is one of the activities for the leadership badge. I have one Junior who teaches every volunteer how to run the rock raffle. We have kids sign up to facilitate the rock raffle and randomly pick one of our Juniors at each meeting. This has been a great way for the kids to learn about fundraising for the club as well as working on the leadership badge. I think this might be an activity our kids look forward to the most.

**Here is a fun game idea for Juniors Groups!**

We played this game during the January meeting because it's typically a slow month after the holidays but this got everyone excited! It turned out to be such a fun game and I know we will play it again in the future

I paired up an older Junior with a younger Junior to ensure the teams were fair because the game involved some reading. I gave each team a copy of the Juniors Newsletter, "Crack the Code", a copy of our club's newsletter, and a copy of all of the officers in our club. I asked trivia questions that could be found in either newsletter or questions about club officers. Each time the team found the answer, they had to raise their hand and yell "Coprolite!" Of course, I made sure all teams had the opportunity to answer and all of the teams won some prizes! The kids had such a blast playing and they learned some things about our club. This also encouraged them to read the newsletters! For prizes, we had some slabs and each team got to choose something for their collection.

Keeping our Juniors engaged and excited about the club can always be a struggle for everyone so sometimes I have to change things up. We played a really fun trivia game recently, and the kids had so much fun. I paired up an older Junior with a younger Junior because our game required some reading. I gave each group a copy of the Juniors Newsletter and our club newsletter. I then asked each group questions from the newsletters and when each team found the answer, they yelled out COPROLITE!

The kids learned some new things, won some rocks as prizes, and had so much fun.



## NEW WEBMASTER FOR THE SCFMS

All,

I am Mike Smith, the new SCFMS Webmaster.

Don Shutz suggested I introduce myself so that you have a contact to keep the SCFMS site as up to date as possible.

I am the former webmaster for the Paleontological Society of Austin (PSA). I've been involved in Central Texas paleo clubs for 33 years, am past President, Show Chair, Editor, and current Treasurer of PSA.

I created the submission that got PSA its 501(c)3 designation. Currently I am part of the Fossil ID team for the national Paleontological Society and volunteer one day a week at the UT Non-vertebrate Lab.

I rebuilt the SCFMS website in August. The organization and content are roughly the same, though it should be easier to maintain. The links to member clubs have been checked and corrected. Nothing fancy, no server-side code, just HTML and some JavaScript.

Please let me know when I need to update content on the site. Especially when:

- the newsletter is ready.
- events are scheduled that members might need to know.
- submissions are due (website and editor competitions, dues, officer forms, ...)
- results from website and newsletter competitions are available
- Insurance, Dues, and Officer forms need to change.

For the newsletter, best to send me a pdf. For the others I'd like the basic data either in Word or Excel, or as text or a csv file. Something I can turn into HTML.

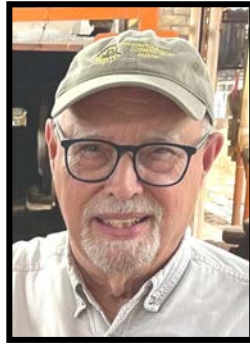
I have copies of the various SCFMS forms and can update those if the only requirement is a change to due dates and/or mailing addresses.

If you see anything on SCFMS.net that needs modification, let me know.

I look forward to working with you all.

Mike

Michael Smith, PhD, PE (inactive)  
Austin, TX  
webmaster@scfms.net



**Michael Smith,**  
**SCFMS Webmaster**

## UPCOMING SHOWS 2025

**September 27-28—LUBBOCK, TEXAS:** Annual show; Lubbock Gem and Mineral Society; Lubbock Memorial Civic Center, 1501 Mac Davis Lane; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-4; \$5 Adults age 12 and up, \$3 Age 6-11, under 6 free;

**October 3-5—WESTWEGO, LOUISIANA:** Annual show; Gem & Mineral Society of Louisiana, Inc; John A. Alario, Sr. Event Center (Alario Center), 2000 Segnette Blvd.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10:30-4; Adults - \$7 for all weekend pass. Kids 11 & under - free. Students, Military, & Members with ID - \$3;

**October 17-19—AUSTIN, TEXAS:** Annual show; Austin Gem and Mineral Society; Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Rd; Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; Adults \$8, Seniors/Military ID \$7, Ages 13-18 \$2, 12 and under free; Hosting the SCFMS annual convention events on October 18, 2025

**November 7-9—HUMBLE, TEXAS:** Annual show; Houston Gem and Mineral Society; Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Parkway; Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; \$12 adults, seniors, kids over 10; Dino Dig for kids. Youth section with games and touch specimens. Scout merit badge program. More than 40 dealers; contact Scott Singleton; Email: fossilwood@comcast.net; Website: <https://hgms.org/>

**November 8-9—AMARILLO, TEXAS:** Show; Golden Spread Gem, Mineral & Treasure Society; Amarillo Civic Center, 401 S. Buchanan St; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5

**November 15-16—FORT WORTH, TEXAS:** Show and sale; Fort Worth Gem and Mineral Club; Will Rogers Memorial Center/Roundup Inn, 3401 W Lancaster St; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; Adults \$7, Seniors, Students \$5, Kids 12 & under free

**November 22-23—MESQUITE, TEXAS:** Annual show; Dallas Gem and Mineral Show; Mesquite Convention Center, 1700 Rodeo Dr; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5

## THANK YOU!

To those who helped make this issue possible...

**Don Shurtz**

**Jan Ozias**

**Jim Brace-Thompson**

**Erin Irwin**

**Austin Gem and Mineral Society**

**John Conners**

**Garret Romaine**

**Brad Smith**

**Michael Smith**