

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 2026

NEWSLETTER OF THE
SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION
Of Mineral Societies



2026 SCFMS
ANNUAL CONVENTION

HOSTED BY

HOUSTON GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

73rd Annual Gem, Mineral, Jewelry
& Fossil Show

Nov 13 - 15, 2026

HUMBLE CIVIC CENTER

Tickets \$12

Good for all 3 days,

kids 10 & under get in free

(Purchase ahead online or in-person at the show)



Albite on Schorl
Skardu District, Pakistan

Photo by Steve Blyskal
www.trusconminerals.com



hgms.org

facebook.com/hgms.org | instagram.com/hgms.org_tx

Member of: The American Federation of Mineral Societies

- Over 40 gem, mineral, jewelry, bead, lapidary, and fossil dealers with unique specimens from around the world
- Educational displays, demonstrations, and classes on jewelry making, beading, and lapidary techniques
- Children's activities, Scout merit badge program, and the "Dino Dig"
- Expert identification of gemstones, minerals, and fossils

November 13-15, 2026

Friday: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. (Kids Day)

Saturday: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Tickets: \$12.00 (good for all 3 days)

Children 10 and under Free!

Free parking!

Humble Civic Center

8233 Will Clayton Parkway

Humble, Texas 77338

Swap area just for bargain hunters!

Grand prize drawing opportunity

Free Parking



www.hgms.org

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SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.

2026 SCFMS OFFICERS

President: Sigrid Stewart

Executive V-P: Rick Price

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Henry Rojas

Web Master: Mike Smith

Exec. Secretary: Susan Burch

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

**SCFMS Endowment Fund
Treasurer: Walt Beneze**

**Nominating Committee –
Ron Carman**

Past President: Don Shurtz

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

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 or the SCFMS. 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 2026
HOUSTON GMS
HUMBLE, TX,
NOVEMBER 14-15**

**ANNUAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 14TH, 2 PM**

**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



President's Message

By Sigrid Stewart, SCFMS President



Sigrid Stewart,
SCFMS President

The **2026 Convention of the South Central Federation of Mineral Societies** is coming up on **November 14th** this fall! This year the Convention will be held in conjunction with the **HGMS Annual Gem, Mineral, Jewelry & Fossil Show** which runs 3 days from Friday, November 13th (9am-6pm), Saturday November 14th (9am-6pm), and Sunday November 15th (10am-5pm). It is HGMS' 73rd Annual Show, with over 45 vendors, and many activities.

The Annual Show and the SCFMS Convention will be held at the **Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy in Humble, Texas**, north of Houston proper. All Convention activities will take place on the 14th, with the Editors/Webmasters meeting at 8am, The Annual Meeting at 2pm and the Awards dinner at 7pm. A block of rooms has been reserved at a nearby hotel, and the Civic Center may have RV spaces available. Registration forms are ready. Let's get together and talk about what we can do to further our hobby!

Activities:

All activities for the SCFMS Annual Convention will take place on Saturday November 14th at the Humble Civic Center in Humble, Texas, in the Hospitality area of the set-up for the HGMS Annual Show.

- Editors/Webmasters Contest will be held from 8:00 am to 10:00 am.
- SCFMS Annual Convention will be held from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm.
- The Award Dinner will take place at 7:00 pm.
- Rollin Rock Club will as usual be at 9:00 am on Sunday morning, before the Show opens.

If anyone is interested in visiting the HGMS clubhouse, that will have to take place on Monday, as club members will be busy with Show activities.

Why Staybridge Suites?

The Staybridge Suites is the suggested hotel for convention attendees. It is one of the closest hotels to the Humble Civic Center, it has good ratings and they can provide a gathering place and a shuttle. We thought that might reassure people who are uncertain about navigating Houston traffic.



The QR code at right is the reservation link to the reserved block of rooms.

There are of course other hotels:

- Regency Inn & Suites
- WoodSpring Suites Houston IAH Airport
- Ramada by Wyndham Houston Intercontinental Airport
- East La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham
- Holiday Inn Houston NE
- Palace Inn IAH Houston
- TownePlace Suites by Marriot
- Comfort Suites Humble Houston IAH

Houston Area Attractions:

- Houston Museum of Natural Science
- Katy Rock Shop
- The Focal Crystal
- Downtown Aquarium
- Houston Botanic Gardens
- Mercer Gardens
- Space Center Houston
- The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston
- Bayou Bend Collection

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR: On the following pages you will find more information about the upcoming convention, including Registration, Delegate, and Application to Display Forms. If you wish to fill out the forms electronically, the two free PDF editors we suggest are pdf24.com or sejda.com.



South Central Federation of Mineral Societies Arkansas • Louisiana • Texas

2026 Convention Registration Form

The South Central Federation of Mineral Societies Inc.'s
2026 Annual Meeting will be held in conjunction with:

Houston Gem and Mineral Society's 73rd Annual Show

November 14 (9-6), 15 (9-6) and 16 (10-5), 2026

Humble Civic Center

8233 Will Clayton Pkwy, Humble Texas 77338

Please complete a form for each person attending.

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Society Name: _____ Representative: _____

<i>Event</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i># Attending</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
Editors/Webmasters Breakfast	\$25		
Awards Dinner Buffet	\$35		
Show Ticket	\$10		
Total			

Please email completed form to Editor@hgms.org Forms

must be received by Tuesday, October 15, 2026

Payment can be made via QR Code at right or Check

Checks should be made out to:

Houston Gem and Mineral Society

Include "2026 SFMS" in memo field and mail to:

Houston Gem and Mineral Society

10805 Brooklet Dr, Houston, TX 77099

Payment must be received by Friday November 1, 2026



Preferred Lodging: Staybridge Suites, 7195 Will Clayton Pkwy, Humble TX 77338

[*Reservations Booking Link*](#)

Reservations will be closed October 15th.



2026 SCFMS CONVENTION DELEGATE FORM
SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.
ARKANSAS - LOUISIANA - TEXAS

The information below is from the SCFMS Constitution and By-laws 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 October 15, 2026, to Sigrid Stewart, SCFMS President, 20403 Coleridge Ln, Richmond, TX 77407, or email sigrid.stewart@gmail.com**



Member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies





2026 SCFMS CONVENTION DELEGATE FORM
SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION OF MINERAL SOCIETIES, INC.
ARKANSAS - LOUISIANA - TEXAS

DIRECTOR OR DIRECTOR DELEGATE/ALTERNATE FORM
SCFMS ANNUAL MEETING
NOVEMBER 15, 2026
HUMBLE CIVIC CENTER
8233 WILL CLAYTON
PKWY HUMBLE, TX 77338

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

NAME OF ORGANIZATION:

SFMS DIRECTOR (Your Club President) with email address:

(The President of each Organization is a Director of the SCFMS. Please list the President's name only if the President plans to attend this meeting).

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

SIGNATURE OF CLUB PRESIDENT DIRECTOR:

DATE: _____



Member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies



HOUSTON GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY
SCFMS SHOW & CONVENTION
November 13 - 15, 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 edition of the AFMS Uniform Rules will be used for judging

Check one: _____ I will need to borrow a case from the host club

or

_____ I have my own case, size: Length _____ depth _____ height _____

Displays should be set up the afternoon of _____

Entry forms must be returned by November 3, 2026 to:

US Mail: Ronald Carman, 209 Smoky Mountain Drive, San Marcos, Texas 78666
Or by e-mail: rrcarman@centurytel.net

Thank you for your exhibit. We are happy to have it in our show.

This form may be duplicated.

MINES AND MINERALS

Sigrid Stewart, SCFMS President

Where is the best place to collect fresh, unweathered minerals? In a mine of course! Unfortunately, it can be hard for the average collector to get access. People stake leases and buy properties to establish mines in the hopes of making a profit. In other words, private property.

There is also the fact that mines can be dangerous. Even surface diggings have unequal footing and occasionally hanging walls that can prove lethal. I know of a collapse due to digging under an outcrop on BLM land that caused the death of a rockhound. People can fall off (small) cliffs and live, or have a rock fall on their heads.



Professionally operated mines in countries like the U.S. are generally safe due to their adherence to rules and regulations to keep their employees safe. These mines are private property and don't want access by random people interfering with their activities and exposing

them to liability. What mine owner wants to be sued because a rockhound came in illegally and got hurt? Mines in other countries may be a different story, and that's just one reason mineral specimens from exotic localities can be expensive.

Some mines, especially underground mines, are more dangerous than others due to poor ventilation, poisonous gases, blasting, and rock and shoring instability. OK, let the pros handle those! As a student, I was able to enter a mine with a professor's class due to his association with the mining company. We had stringent training, including the use of a rebreather in case of fire or toxic gas. Toxic gas in mines? Sometimes! Miners used to bring canaries into mines. If the canary dropped dead you knew you had to get out right away.

The point of this discussion is that once in a while a mine or a quarry will allow access, usually to organized groups who coordinate with them and let their members know they must abide by the rules and

pay attention during safety lectures. Timing is important too; you are not likely to be admitted during working hours! If company employees must be present they are likely donating their personal time and they certainly don't want to give up all their weekends. It doesn't hurt to ask if there is any way a locality would be willing to host a field trip. If you are able to collect in a privately operated mine or quarry, be sure to show your appreciation!

If the mine or quarry is not currently being operated, you should still be careful about collecting there because you may be trespassing and there may be unknown dangers. Old mine shafts and adits in Colorado used to be open and unattended, but the wood shoring up those tunnels was getting worn especially on the old ladders in adits. The State of Colorado opted to bar entrances to keep people out of dangerous situations. There is occasionally good hunting on the old tailing piles, but again, please make sure you are not trespassing. Getting arrested or even shot at is not a good vacation move.

Recently my husband and I were able to join an organized field trip to a limestone mine to collect calcite crystals. Mine employees, volunteering their own time, signed us up and gave safety lectures and ID tags to wear, and made sure we were properly equipped, then drove us into the mine and helped light the area with their work trucks! It was an awesome trip, and we are asking about future field trips. More on that possibility later!

Calcite photos by Steve Blyskal



NOTES ON PUBLIC RELATIONS FROM THE AFMS CONVENTION

Jim Brace-Thompson, AFMS PR Chair

Happy autumn, one and all! As I write this in early August, it sure doesn't feel like fall as a heat wave continues to grip southern California. Hopefully, that will have changed by the time you're reading this. Before our newsletter entered its summer hiatus, I noted I'd be hosting a roundtable session at the MWF/AFMS Show & Convention in St. Charles, Illinois, a give-and-take session to share and to question. That roundtable took place May 22 with 15 participants from at least 5 of our 7 regional federations. In no particular order, here are points that stood out to me as I struggled to take notes while participating in the session.

The importance of frequency. Whether promoting a club show, seeking competitive exhibits for a Federation show, getting word out to your community about your club and inviting the general public to your meetings, a single message is not enough. Messaging needs to start early and go out often. For instance, don't expect a ton of competitive exhibits if you only put one message in one newsletter article one or two months before the show. As one participant put it, "It's not one-and-done!" Start ridiculously early and build with more and more details as you go, and, whenever possible, utilize multiple avenues: newsletter articles, email blasts to any group lists you and your club maintains, social media posts, website postings, etc.

Visual impact. It's said we live in an age of short attention spans. In such an age, a single strong visual is literally worth a thousand words. So support your messaging with a photo. Seeking to promote your educational outreach program?

Show happy kids having fun while learning. Clubs have also found that brief TikTok style videos are a strong draw to pull eyes to your website, Facebook and Instagram accounts, Pinterest, etc. In my own club, one member periodically goes around the floor during our club shows to shoot brief clips of different stations (kids both, raffle, demonstrators, exhibits) for immediate posting to social media. Why use dense paragraphs to tell people they can have fun at your show when you can actually show people having fun? Another club found that posting brief and original how-to videos is a terrific draw to their social media and websites, videos heavy on how-to techniques: how to make a particular jewelry project,

how to clean jewelry, how to shop for faceted stones or crystals, etc.

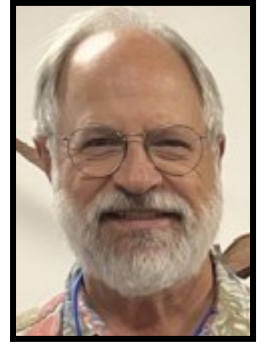
Partnering: adding value to your community. Don't be a hidden gem within your community. To raise the visibility and value of your local society, reach out and partner! What existing community organizations have needs and objectives aligning with yours? Our attendees mentioned city and county parks and rec departments, homeschool associations, school district science teachers, local science museums, libraries, and arts associations.

Do you have a direct contact with movers-and-shakers in such groups within your town and county? Also partner with your show vendors by promoting them as sources of supplies and knowledge, and they'll often support you — for instance, distributing your show flyers at the many shows they attend.

Does your club have a PR Chair? My club does not. I've informally assumed such a position to better get word out about us (sending press releases when we award our annual scholarship, posting clips about our special events and monthly meeting in the "Events" section of our local media, etc.).

But so much more could be accomplished if we had a formally established position, a committee chair with a true committee—a team where one person focuses on social media, another on traditional media, another with community contacts, etc., all presenting a consistent and uniform message.

Bonterra. Finally, one attendee mentioned Bonterra. Bon-whata? It's a group that bills itself as "technology for social good," and they apparently have free resources for nonprofits, including a "Bonterra Academy" offering webinars, classes, and trainings. They say they're used by 170,000 nonprofits. I've only skimmed their website, but I saw enough to come away thoroughly intrigued. I definitely plan to dig deeper. (Watch for a future article on it.) It's tidbits like this that make our PR roundtables so valuable, and I offer my sincere thanks to all who attended and shared in St. Charles!



Jim Brace-Thompson,
AFMS PR Chair



BEST BULLETIN CONTEST

The 2027 SCFMS
Authors and Editors
contest entry deadline
is January 10th, 2027



Help the SCFMS fill vacant officer positions. Nominate someone you know to fill these positions or nominate yourself. Send nominations to SCFMS President, Sigrid Stewart (sigrid.stewart@gmail.com) or SCFMS Executive Secretary, Susan Burch (scfm-seditor@yahoo.com). Nominated parties will be contacted and discussed at the 2026 Annual Meeting.

DUES & INSURANCE

Dues and Insurance payments are due BEFORE

September 30th.



It's that time of year again, the dues and insurance premiums are due by September 30th, 2026. The forms are included in this issue of the newsletter. However, you can also find the forms on the SCFMS website.

<https://scfms.net/formsmembers.html>



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 or call 936-615-5397****



Member of the American Federation of
Mineralogical Societies



SCFMS CLUB OFFICER, EDITOR, AND WEBMASTER SUBMISSION FORM



CLUB INFORMATION:

CLUB NAME: _____

(Please pay special attention to "&" or "and")

CLUB MAILING ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

CLUB PHONE NUMBER: _____

MEETING LOCATION ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

MEETING TIME: _____

MEETING DATE: _____

OR MEETING RECURS MONTHLY ON THE: ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th WEEK

ON: ☐ Mon. ☐ Tues. ☐ Wed. ☐ Thurs. ☐ Fri. ☐ Sat. ☐ Sun.

EXCLUDED MONTHS: ☐ January ☐ February ☐ March ☐ April ☐ May ☐ June

☐ July ☐ August ☐ September ☐ October ☐ November ☐ December

CLUB WEBSITE: _____

CLUB FACEBOOK PAGE: _____

CLUB NEWSLETTER NAME: _____

OUR CLUB IS A 501(c)(3) ORGANIZATION: ☐ YES ☐ NO

ANNUAL SHOW:

SHOW TITLE: _____

ANNUAL SHOW MONTH: ☐ January ☐ February ☐ March ☐ April ☐ May ☐ June

☐ July ☐ August ☐ September ☐ October ☐ November ☐ December

ANNUAL SHOW CALENDAR DATES: _____

ANNUAL SHOW OCCURS ON (select all days): ☐ Mon. ☐ Tues. ☐ Wed. ☐ Thurs. ☐ Fri. ☐ Sat. ☐ Sun.

DAY 1 SHOW OPEN TIME: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM CLOSE TIME: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM

DAY 2 SHOW OPEN TIME: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM CLOSE TIME: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM

DAY 3 SHOW OPEN TIME: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM CLOSE TIME: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM

DAY 4 SHOW OPEN TIME: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM CLOSE TIME: _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM

SHOW FACILITY NAME: _____

SHOW ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

NAME OF SHOW CHAIR OR SHOW CONTACT: _____

SHOW CHAIR PHONE NUMBER: _____

SHOW CHAIR EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

☐ WE DO NOT HOLD AN ANNUAL SHOW

☐ WE HOLD MORE THAN ONE SHOW PER YEAR

List additional show information: _____

SCFMS CLUB OFFICER, EDITOR, AND WEBMASTER SUBMISSION FORM

CLUB OFFICER INFORMATION: CLUB NAME: _____

MONTH OF OFFICER ELECTIONS: ☐January ☐February ☐March ☐April ☐May ☐June
☐July ☐August ☐September ☐October ☐November ☐December

☐MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER)

PRESIDENT NAME: _____
MAILING ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

☐MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER) ☐POSITION VACANT

1ST VICE PRESIDENT NAME: _____
MAILING ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

☐MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER) ☐POSITION VACANT

SECRETARY NAME: _____
MAILING ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

☐MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER) ☐POSITION VACANT TREASURER NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

☐MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER) ☐POSITION VACANT

EDITOR NAME: _____
MAILING ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

☐MAIN CONTACT (SELECT ONE OFFICER) ☐POSITION VACANT WEBMASTER NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

SCFMS WE WILL NO LONGER ACCEPT CLUB ADDRESSES OR CLUB PHONE NUMBERS FOR CONTACT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY MEMBER CLUBS. WE HAVE TAKEN MEASURES TO IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE USE OF THE DATA WE COLLECT AND PROTECT THE PERSONAL INFORMATION WE OBTAIN. PLEASE READ OUR [PRIVACY POLICY](#) AND CONTACT A CURRENT SCFMS OFFICER IF THERE ARE CONCERNS. OFFICER INFORMATION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY WITH DUES FOR AND AGAIN BY FEBRUARY 1, 2026. YOU MAY UPDATE AS SOON AS ELECTIONS ARE HELD, AND SHOULD UPDATE WITHIN 30 DAYS OF ANY CHANGE IN OFFICERS.

☐ **I HAVE READ THE SCFMS PRIVACY POLICY AND CONSENT TO SCFMS USE OF THE CLUB INFORMATION I HAVE PROVIDED.**

EMAIL FILLED FORMS TO THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND DIRECTORY CHAIR:
LSUSAN BURCH, scfmseditor@yahoo.com AND DON SHURTZ, don.shurtz@gmail.com. QUESTIONS? 936-615-5397
OR YOU MAY PRINT AND MAIL TO: SUSAN BURCH, 10911 HOLLY SPRINGS DR, HOUSTON, TX 77042

FROM ROCK TO RETRO

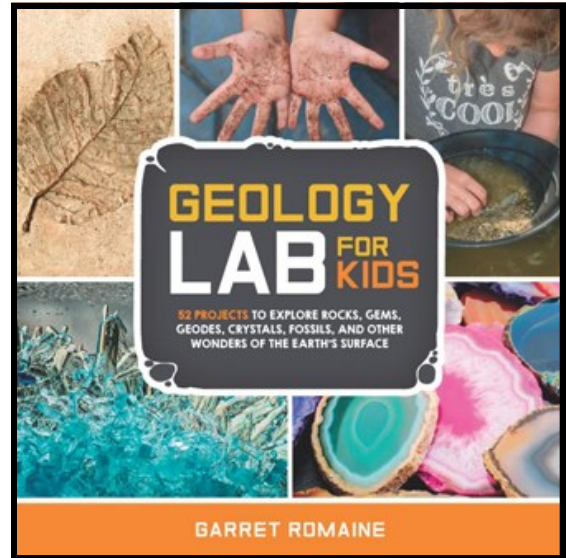
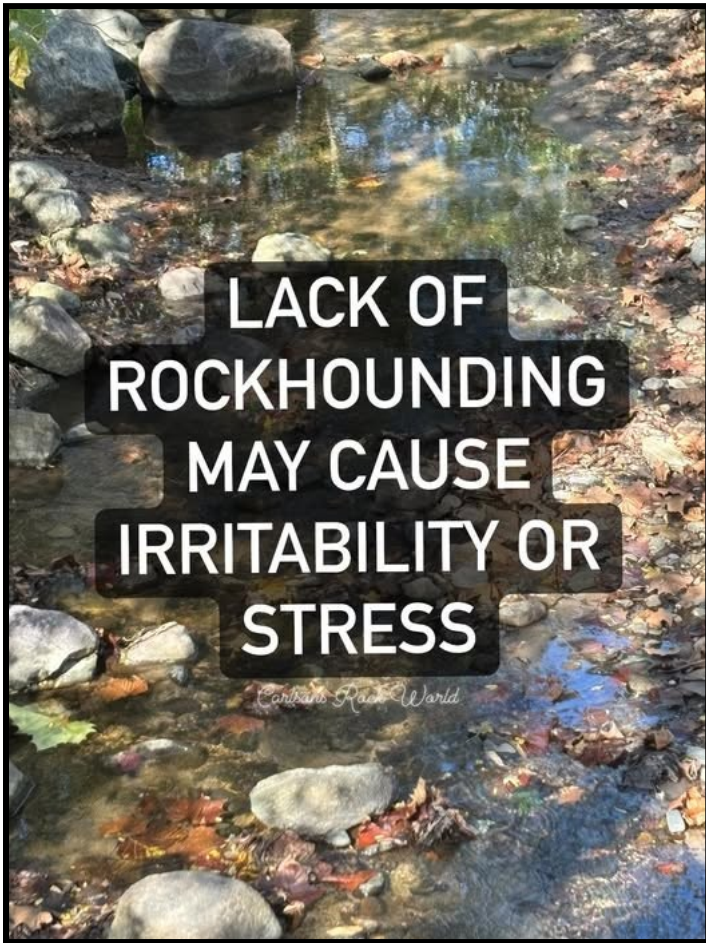
By Brian Curl, Happy Hounding Lapidary Arts and Collectables



My name is Brian Curl. I am the Co-Owner and operator of Happy Hounding Lapidary Arts and Collectables, based out of the Pacific Northwest. I've had a passion for rocks and stones since I was a child, but I've been grinding and cutting stones more seriously since 2020. Ever since I got into lapidary, I've tried to create things that nobody else is creating. I, more or less, let the stone speak for itself. When I see things in rocks I try to capture that. Which brings us to the lava lamp series. I had some self mined polka dot

agate that I felt traditional cabochons just wouldn't do it justice. It's hard to say where the idea came from, there was a lightbulb that went off. More of a lava lamp, one might say, if you catch my drift. Being raised with a "hippy" mom, I thought of her. Now, to find the quality within the Polka Dot Agate is a rare thing, since most of it isn't as translucent, so I've only been able to make three of these pieces so far, but still have enough material left for a couple more. In the past, I've really enjoyed creating fun miniature items. Most of my inspiration tends to come from my friends and loved ones, the things they like and enjoy. Lapidary is fun, so why not create things that will make folks smile when they see it.





Reprinted with permission from Author, Garret Romaine. Please, include the link below.

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



Nature loves to coat things in mud and make them round—and big.

MATERIALS

- 1 cup (225 g) of unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 cup (120 g) of sifted powdered sugar, plus 1/2 cup (60 g) for rolling
- 2 teaspoons (5 ml) of vanilla extract
- Sifter
- 2 cups (250 g) of flour
- 1/4 teaspoon of salt
- 1 cup (110 g) of finely chopped pecans, walnuts, or almonds
- 10–12 chocolate chips
- 1 cup (86 g) of sifted cocoa powder

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Continued from Page



PROTOCOL

STEP 1: Mix the butter and 1 cup (120 g) of powdered sugar in a large mixing bowl.

STEP 2: Add the vanilla and beat until fluffy.

STEP 3: Sift the flour and salt twice, and then add gradually to your butter mix.

STEP 4: Add the nuts and mix completely.

STEP 5: Roll the dough into small, 1 inch (2.5 cm), perfectly round balls, but be sure to push a chocolate chip into the middle. This can get messy! Place the raw balls onto an ungreased cookie sheet and cook for ten to twelve minutes at 400°F (200°C) until you start to see browning; then remove from oven

STEP 6: While the tea balls are still warm, roll them around in powdered sugar on a plate or pan.

STEP 7: When they cool, roll them around again, this time in cocoa powder.

STEP 8: Spray the tea balls with a water mist, and roll the balls again in powdered sugar. Repeat this step as many times as you can. The goal is to build a bigger and bigger tea ball, but after a while, it's hard to get any more powder on.

STEP 9: Cut a tea ball in half with a sharp knife, carefully avoiding knocking off too much sugar



Safety Tips

- Be cautious around the oven to avoid burns.
- Ask an adult for help using the oven.
- Be careful when baking these tea balls—use kitchen gloves or hot pads.

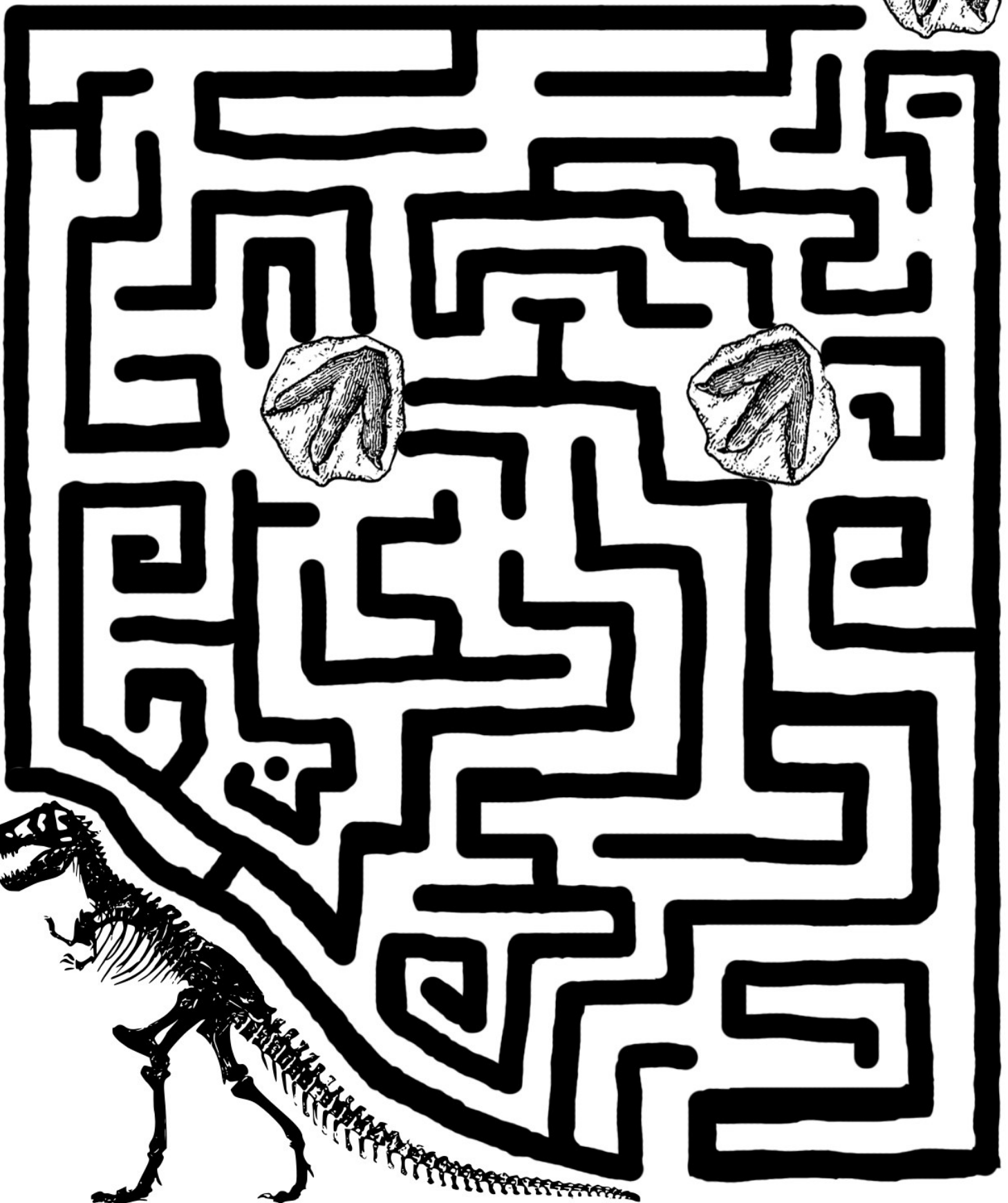
THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE FUN

Concretions are like nature's surprise—you never know what your prize will be. Sometimes there is nothing in there, but sometimes it's a fossil. You simulated the fossil by pushing in a chocolate chip. Many sedimentary rocks form in ocean bays or lagoons where the water is not clear and there is usually a lot of dissolved mud. When the mud is rich in calcium carbonate, it becomes sticky and begins to coat anything it finds. When you use dry powder, you don't have as much luck as nature does using mud, which tends to stick to everything, including itself. Concretions usually start by coating a shell, such as a clam or snail that was unlucky enough to get trapped there. This is the part you simulated with forming your cookie around a chocolate chip.

When small waves push around the small balls in this calcium-rich mud, the balls continue to grow, and can reach 6 feet (2 m) across. The famed Bearpaw Formation, which stretches from Canada to Colorado, was once part of the tropical seas. These rocks contain many deposits of concretions, which sometimes contain *ammonite*, a beautiful fossilized shell of an ammonite. These concretions are mined for their gems. Sandstone formations around the world contain concretions, sometimes with iron pyrite, barite, and other minerals. In 2004, NASA scientists using the Opportunity rover discovered small, round spheres on Mars, which they called "blueberries" because the rocks looked like a blueberry muffin. The spheres turned out to be rich in hematite, an iron ore, and the roundness was a clue that there was once water on Mars.

A-MAZE-ING FOSSILS

By Susan Burch, SCFMS Editor



You don't have to be a geologist to love rocks.
Maybe you found one while hiking.
Maybe your child brought one home.
Maybe you love beautiful stones.
That curiosity is where rockhounding
begins. The LGMS exists to encourage the
study, collecting and display of rocks,
minerals, gems, fossils, and the performance
of lapidary and jewelry arts.



The LGMS meets at 3007
33rd Street, Lubbock Texas
on the first Tuesday of each
month at 7:00 pm.

Membership is open to all
interested parties.
Visitors are always welcome!

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 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 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, 2026
NEWSLETTER IS
OCTOBER 25, 2026**

BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH

LAYOUT TOOLS

Dimensions on some features of a design can be fluid while others must be accurate for the design to work. When precision on a piece is important, good layout techniques are essential. These are the tools that I rely upon to get holes in the right place, to achieve correct angles, and to cut pieces the correct length. I like crisp sharp lines to follow, so I often coat surfaces with a dark marker and scribe my layout lines on to the metal. A square makes quick work of checking right angles or marking where to cut, and the thin centerpunch helps me mark a place to drill holes exactly where I want them. Finally, a good set of dividers is probably my favorite layout tool. They let me quickly mark a strip for cutting, swing an arc, and divide a line or curve into as many equal segments as I need. I keep at least one set of dividers in every toolbox.



SHINING UP YOUR CHAINS After a usual polish, the best way to give your silver chains a great shine is to tumble them with steel shot. In my classes, we used a mixture of different shapes of stainless steel shot in a rotary tumbler along with a half cup of water and a drop of soap. 30-45 minutes gives a great shine.



See More of my Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making at <http://amazon.com/dp/B0BQ8YVLTJ>

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 metal-working skills
- Improve productivity at the bench
- Save money on tools and supplies

Happy hammering,
- Brad Smith

BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com

Please, check out more Smart
Solutions for Your Jewelry
Making Problems

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



UPCOMING SHOWS 2026

September 26-27—LUBBOCK, TEXAS: Annual show; Lubbock Gem and Mineral Society; Lubbock Memorial Civic Center; Email: walt@lubbockgemandmineral.org; Website: www.LubbockGemandMineral.org

October 23-25—AUSTIN, TEXAS: Annual show; Austin Gem & Mineral Society (AGMS); Palmer Events Center; Website: <https://www.agms-tx.org/>

October 31-November 1—AMARILLO, TEXAS: Annual show; Golden Spread Gem Mineral & Treasure Society; Amarillo Civic Center; Email: Kassidy.gsgmts@outlook.com

November 14-15—SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS: Annual show; Southwest Gem & Mineral Society; San Antonio Garden Center; Website: <http://www.swgms.org/>

November 13-15—HUMBLE, TEXAS: Annual show; Houston Gem and Mineral Society; Combination show hosting the SCFMS; Humble Civic Center; Email: fossilwood@comcast.net; Website: <https://www.hgms.org/>



To those who helped make this issue possible...

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Lubbock Gem & Mineral Society

Brad Smith