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SLAB-GAB

Volume 46

November 2011

No. 8

Member of: The South Central Federation of Mineral Societies &
The American Federation of Mineral Societies

Meetings—First Friday of Month
No meeting in July

P.O. Box 2804
Victoria, TX 77902

Purpose: To promote education and share our interest in the various earth sciences through the study of lapidary arts, mineralogy, and archaeology within the meaning of section 501 (c) (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding sections of future United States Internal Revenue Code.

The November meeting will be held Fri., Nov. 4, at the Victoria Art League located at 905 S. Bridge, Victoria, TX. Fellowship-6:30, Competition Judging-6:45, Business Mtg.-7pm.



Great Show!

GINNA'S GEMS

Virginia Adian, SCFMS President

When I wrote my letter and report after our meeting in Alpine in April, I recalled seeing the smoke and flames in West Texas. The news was filled with reports of numerous wildfires then. The news has not changed much since then, except the fires have gotten worse and the temperatures have gone up and stayed up...and drained us all. The drought and heat have taken an increasing toll on our area. I hope our SCFMS rockhounds have been able to survive without personal loss. I offer my best wishes to those who may have lost homes or businesses.

A reminder that *National Fossil Day is October 12*. You can still find information at "<http://nature.nps.gov/geology/nationalfossilday>" I hope your club will do something to call attention to this rich field of study. Kids love fossils. This can be a good way to bring new interest from junior rockhounds.

I am always reminded that many officers or club members do not know much about AFMS nor the seven regional federations. I encourage you to give your club officers and members the websites of AFMS <http://www.amfed.org> and SCFMS <http://www.scfms.net>. The condensed directory, with contact people from all our SCFMS clubs, as well as meeting dates, times, and places, and show dates, is available. You can also find all contact information for SCFMS officers and committee members. The most recent newsletters for both organizations are posted on these websites. These are available to all club members.

I am so excited that Kevin Schleicher, a member of Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society, has accepted the job of Junior Programs chairman. Kevin and other members of the Gulf Coast club had a rock camp this summer which was very successful. This is the kind of mentoring program our junior rockhounds need.

Actually, when I think of sparking that interest in rocks, minerals, and fossils, I always think of Buddy Crane, a past member of the Victoria Gem and Min. Soc. Buddy loved kids and loved to share his love and knowledge of rocks and minerals with them. He volunteered a lot of time and energy to the children at the elementary school in Refugio, Texas where he lived. I saw Buddy's granddaughter, now a school teacher, at a gem show following Buddy's death. She told me they buried Buddy with rocks in his pockets because that was how he lived his life. He always had tumbled rock in his pockets to give to children. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE YOU GAVE A CHILD A POLISHED ROCK? KEEP THE PASSION GOING!

I hope I can get to some of your gem shows in the coming months. Please keep us informed of your club activities.

Happy hunting and polishing,

Virginia Adian
President, SCFMS

from SCFMS Newsletter - Sept.-Oct., 2011

The Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society would very much appreciate it if you would list our 36th Annual Show in your Club's newsletter, "SLAB GAB". Since our show comes up in February, the earlier you list it, the better. Critical information items about the show are as follows:

Date: Feb. 25 and 26, 2012 (Friday and Saturday)

Location: Pasadena Convention Center, 7902 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, TX

Hours: Sat., 2/25, 10 to 6pm Sun., 2/26, 10-5 pm.

Donations: Adults \$5, Kids under 12 free, students 6th to 12th grades \$1., boy and girl scouts in uniform free. Lots of free parking. There are 10 spots for RV parking but electric/water hookups cost \$10/night.

For more information see the club's web site at www.clgms.org

Thank you,

Ben Duggar

Co-chair, CLGMS Show Publicity Committee

sailduggar@verizon.net

What Price Is the Right Price?

by Karen M. Burns, Houston Gem & Mineral Society

From: *The Backbender's Gazette*, 4/2010

(2nd Place – AFMS Original Adult Articles)

The question came up again the other day—how do I figure my cost of goods sold, and how do I price my jewelry for sale?

Figuring Costs: For the hobby jewelry maker who is not selling \$100,000 or more per year, figuring costs is simple. It is what you paid for materials. If you are doing wire wrap and fabrication, you can weigh or measure the materials, and using a conversion chart such as the one in the Rio Grande catalog or one of the online conversion charts, multiply it times the per gram cost of your purchases.

If you make and use cabochons or faceted stones, use the cost of the rough as the cost of the stone. Any waste that you use later has a cost of \$0. Keep track of what you purchased and what you have at the end of the year. The difference is your cost of goods sold for tax purposes.

Figuring Costs for Tax Purposes: For tax purposes, there are also administrative costs and overhead such as postage and travel, stationery and envelopes, advertising and tools and equipment. Anything less than \$100-200 of purchases is just added into overhead. Big purchases are prorated by the number of years of expected use—usually 3-5 years. This should supply the information needed to file a schedule C for federal taxes.

Pricing Your Jewelry: Pricing your jewelry requires a few more steps. Estimate the manufacturing costs by measuring or weighing the metals you use, and count the beads and findings and multiply them times your purchase price. These are your material costs for each item. Then include a factor for overhead and administrative costs, utilities, etc. Multiply this by three, and add your hourly wage. **This is your manufacturing cost. Double your manufacturing cost for a wholesale cost**, and that is the lowest price that you should charge for your finished jewelry. If you employed someone to make your finished jewelry, there would be no profit for you at this point.

Profit and Artistic Merit: Profit is a very subjective amount and is what I call the value of "artistic merit," which is the result of your particular choice of materials, your creativity in designing the piece, and your skill in creating the piece of jewelry. The total should be in the neighborhood of three times the manufacturing cost estimate. **Never underestimate the value of artistic merit.** Then look at the piece and adjust the price to what you might be willing to pay. That is the full retail sales price of your jewelry.

Hints on Selling Your Jewelry: Setting prices is an art, not a science, and it depends upon many subtleties, the primary one being the market in which you sell. Set your price, and don't offer discounts—EVER. Forget three for the price of two, etc.—refer to the third sentence. That is simply re-pricing your merchandise. If you want to entice sales, offer something extra such as a pair of earrings or a simple finger ring, something with a low cost that doesn't lower the value of the more expensive piece.

"But my things aren't selling, and my prices are really low." The answer may be, your prices are too low. There is a perception of value for the purchaser—if the price is too low, as in "if it's too good to be true, it probably is," so the perception may be that the materials are cheap, the workmanship shoddy, and the design is poor. Raise your prices to be in keeping with the precious metals and handcrafted work that you are selling.

Consider these two scenarios as examples of pricing and how it can affect sales. The prospective purchaser is holding your jewelry but can't decide and finally says, "I really like it, but it's a little out of my price range. Can you lower the price? After thinking it over a minute—really wait—you lower it by saying, "For the next five minutes and just for you, I will lower it \$XX, because I can see how much you like it." You are making a special, unadvertised deal for this one customer. Or as an alternative, you can offer a pair of earrings or a ring saying, "What if I include this pair of earrings or this ring?" You are selling one-of-a-kind and/or limited edition pieces, and one reduction won't affect your whole inventory.

This is not re-pricing your inventory. The next customer will not expect the same price or gift unless you choose to make the offer. Don't do this routinely, or you are again re-pricing your inventory.

On the other hand, suppose your purchaser is holding your jewelry and says, "I can't believe you're only asking SX, it's so beautiful." It is too late to increase the price when she has it in one hand and her credit card in the other. Price high. You can always lower it if it is really overpriced. How can you tell? If you have too many customers like the first and none of the second.

Sales is an art, and the most highly-paid employees in many businesses are the sales people on commission who have a good product to sell.

Important Dates in November

12th- Marlee Calcote, Anniversary	
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Hunting Fossil "Bugs" in Utah

by Donald Baumgartner, Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society

from: *LOESS Bulletin*, 12/2010

(9th Place – AFMS Original Adult Articles Advanced)

Our host Jake Skabelund and staff of the American Trilobite Suppliers, planned for everything and spared no expense to make this experience safe, memorable, and rewarding for all 60 fossil collectors from California, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and other states. They scoured the area for potentially rich trilobite outcrops to quarry (6 quarries in all, most brand new) obtained all necessary government permits to lease the land and paid the fees, hired locals with heavy machinery to expose the trilobite layers below ground, rented several port-a-johns (even with solar lights to find them in the dark), provided hand-wash stations, enticed a rock hunting equipment dealer to be on site to sell tools if needed, and arranged for a rock table saw for free use to cut down slabs. They even offered attractive T-shirts and caps for sale. I was really impressed with the planning, preparations, and accommodations.

Looking around, I was "not in Kansas (err Chicago) any more". This is the desert, in July. Sunny, cloudless skies, no trees, no shade, no bushes, rocks and cactus, and very hot (in upper 90s to over 100 daily). Needless to say, heat exhaustion and heat stroke is a clear and present danger. You cannot cool down in the dry desert because any sweat evaporates immediately. Water, water, and more water is the key to survival, and the Jam staff were well prepared. They did not want any fossil nuts dropping dead and becoming fossils themselves.

Hourly, Jam staff visited each quarry by ATV to check people with water supplies. "It's even too hot for rattlesnakes" as the Jam experts told us - now that's hot! One thing good about desert fossil collecting is that you do not have to worry about a sudden rainstorm spoiling your plans, and mosquitoes and the pesky deer flies are nonexistent. I definitely over-packed rock tool-wise for this trip, as I really did not know what to expect. All you need are comfortable clothes (long pants of course), a hat, sunscreen, knee pads, boots, water jug, your Eastwing, newspaper to wrap fossils, buckets, flats for fossil storage, a large special pry bar to peel-up the rock layers, and a special iron blade sharpened at one edge to split the layers. While good at home on hard Silurian limestone, sledges, chisels, and safety glasses can be left at home. It's all about splitting the rock layers in the hope of finding trilobites, revealed as positive and negative halves. While one person recommended bringing a tent/canopy as a sun shield, I never used it, as it was impractical with the desert dry wind gusts that came suddenly out of nowhere. The special pry bar and most important iron blades were nothing I ever saw in the Midwest and are not available in hardware stores (I looked). However, the rock hound equipment supplier at the Jam has these (Geological Tools and Outfitter, phone 435/225-6421).

The trilobite collecting was not as dreamed. They were not all over the place and actually were hard to find at most of the quarries after splitting sheets of rocks. The Bathyriscus and Wheeler quarries were the best for me. These rock layers split rather easily using the iron blades. I would estimate that maybe 1-2 complete trilobites per hour could be found from the hard labor in the desert sun. Did I say it was hot! Yes, I did collect a few complete trilobites and lots of parts in two full days. My greatest finds, though, were the other rarer Cambrian fossils, such as a couple *Gorgia*, occasional small early brachiopods, a huge phyllocarid, and a large *Tuzia*. I only collected at the Jam for two days of the four potential. The long dusty drive (2 ½ hours each way), and desert sun and heat really took a toll on this ageing body, which made fossil hunting rather unbearable after 2-3 hours. Although maybe a contributing factor was the antibiotics I was taking at the time, with label warnings of "stay out of the sun," stupid. What we risk for that perfect fossil. Well, at least there were no biting flies to worry about. No insects at all, so leave the bug repellent at home.

While in the area of Delta, a public fee fossil quarry worth visiting is U-Dig. This mid-Cambrian trilobite quarry is famous among fossil nuts for its trilobite *Elrathia kingi*. It is rather easy to get to, but the trip from Delta is long - about 50 miles out of Delta, west on a paved road and another hour's slower drive for 10 miles on an increasingly degraded, dusty desert gravel road to the quarry. The turn-offs are rather well marked. You can just show up, but before you go, I recommend a visit to the small U-Dig "Bug House" (ph. 435/864-3638) in Delta to verify the quarry hours, directions, and access. Be aware that the quarry is closed on Sundays. While at the store, buy your souvenir U-Dig T-shirt. The Bug House also carries a small selection of fossils for sale. The Bug House is hard to find, though (specific directions at end of article). Yet another public access, nearby trilobite quarry is A New Dig, but I did not have time to try this one, and another collector said that it was closed (may have to call ahead for an appointment).

The only other fossil store in Delta is West Desert Collectors (ph. 435/864-2175), off Main street, north side of the street, next to the hardware store. While the largest supply of fossils for sale in town, it has no great diversity, but ask to see the back where they have much more. Overall, there is a pitiful representation of fossil stores in Delta, for being one of the major Cambrian trilobite locations in the U.S.

Many side diversions exist in Utah. One I highly recommend is Moab, in the southeast part of the State. More desert, but Arches National Park is scenic, and the rock shop in Moab is not to be missed. If you're into dinosaur bones and petrified wood, this store has plenty, in large sizes and cheap. Yet another day side-trip is The Dinosaur Discovery Site in the southwest corner of Utah. They are supposed to have a great museum on dinosaur trackways, with day tours, but they are closed on Sundays. What fossil attraction closes on Sundays in the summer? So, I could not fit it into my scheduled trip this time. From Delta, Utah, you can also drive north into southwest Wyoming (only ½ day drive distant) for the world famous fossil fish, which will be covered in a future article.

I hope this account of my summer excursion to Delta, Utah, in search of those elusive trilobites will be retained by you and used as a reference for your own future trip to Utah. Due to the success of this first Trilobite Jam, the organizers now advertise a repeat trip next year in 2011 to be held June 23-26, 2011 (<http://www.trilobitejam.com/generalinfo.html>) .

Would I agree to go again? Maybe. The trilobites were not as abundant as I anticipated, and when factoring in the costs of travel, gas, hotel, food, days off work, new tires, etc. . . . However, I collected some trilobite species and other animals that I rarely find available commercially at local shows or on eBay. The experience was memorable and something I can reminisce about for years to come. Was it worth the trip expense and heat exhaustion? Yes. Would I recommend that others go and follow in my footsteps? Yes, certainly. You will find trilobites. You will have fun, as long as you prepare for the desert (sun and heat), expect average accommodations, and do not mind an inch of desert dust all over the inside of your car (guys - find a woman to help clean your car afterwards - they are just better at it). This is another fossil adventure for your

"bucket list" - one less thing in my "bucket". Now the problem we all have - how do I sneak these trilobites into the house without my wife's finding out, and where do I store them?

All in all, this fossil trilobite trip was fun and productive. The 13 fossil trilobite species treasures that I collected included: *Bathyriscus fimbriatus*; *Bolaspidea wellsvillensis*; *Ptychagnostus cuyanus*; *Modocia laevenucha*; *Linguagnostus perplexus*; *Utaspis marjumensis*; *Bolaspidea* sp.; *Olenoides superbus*; *Asaphiscus wheeleri*; *Hemirhodon ampligyge*; *Marjuria callas*; *Elrathia kingi*; and *Alokistocare harrisi*. Other Cambrian fossil animals I collected included: trilobite resting traces *Ruscophycus*; large pylocarid; *Tuzoia* sp; *Gogia spiralis*; sponge *Diagonella* sp.; *Anomalocaris* coprolite; algal balls?; brachiopods *Acrothele subsidua*; and a possible worm.

I wish to acknowledge and thank the following rock hounds who promptly responded to my inquiries for advice and provided collecting suggestions: Jack Null, Tom Stout, Alan Silverstein, and Dave Fen.

Useful References:

Trilobite Jam: <http://www.trilobitejam.com/generalinfo.html>

American Trilobite Suppliers at <http://www.usatrilobites.com/>

U-Dig Trilobite Quarry: <http://www.u-digfossils.com/> ; Bug House store at 350 E. 300 South, Delta, UT, 435/864-3638 or 435/864-2402 (hard to find - turn South off Main at McDonalds & go to 300 South, turn left (east) on 300 to end of road & follow curve to the store on your left)

Other Trilobite Quarry: A New Dig at <http://www.anewdiginc.com/>

Related Web Sites on Utah Trilobites:

<http://www.utahoutdooractivities.com/trilobitesudig.html>

<http://www.rockpicks.net/udig.htm>

<http://www.4x4now.com/truthr.htm>

<http://www.kumip.ku.edu/cambrianlife/>

<http://www.trilobites.info/Utah.htm>

<http://www.fieldadventures.org/utah/trilobitequarry.html>

<http://www.crossroadstreasures.biz/articles/trilobites.htm>

<http://tyra-rex.com/collecting/u-dig.html>

Videos on Utah Trilobite Hunting:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZjKdWyClmVo>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e45aPudDYPg>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iw8ITe0_zAM

Moab, Utah Rock Shop:

Moab Rock Shop, 600 North Main,

Moab, UT, 435/259-7312 or <http://www.moabrockshop.com/>

Utah Dino Track Site:

Dinosaur Discovery Site, 2180 E. Riverside,

St George, UT 84790, 435/574-3466 or <http://www.sqcity.org/dinotrax/info.php>

Area Store Worth Visiting:

West Desert Collectors, 278 W. Main,

Delta, UT 435/864-2175 (ask to see more fossils in back)

Fossil Tool Supplier:

Geological Tools and Outfitter,

435/225-6421, <http://www.geo-tools.com/>

Area Accommodations:

Days Inn, 527 Topaz Blvd.,

Delta, UT 84624, ph. 435/864-3882 or davsindelta@gmail.com



Dear Fellow VGMS Club Members,

Congratulations and Thank You to all Club Members who helped to make our 2011 Victoria Gem and Mineral Show a big success.

A show of this magnitude takes participation and dedication by our members, and this year saw an increased number of members present and working during the 3 days of our annual show. As always, each member is important and a job is always waiting for you at the show and all are welcome to help in any area you feel comfortable.

Vendors repeatedly tell me how much they enjoy coming to Victoria. Our facility and club members are top notch, and we can be proud of the club's efforts to continue to provide this special show for the Victoria Region.

It is never too early to begin preparing for the 2012 show. If you have any thoughts or ideas on improving our show, please share those ideas with me at the next club meeting.

Thanks again Club Members for all your hard work and dedication.

Sincerely,

Ken Lemke

VGMS Ticket Sales

A great big Thank You to each one who helped sell tickets at the 2011 Show. Each shift was covered and I believe we all had a great time. Your enthusiasm and great smiles are always a nice welcome to guest coming to the show. You were all Great Ambassadors for the club and I hope you will all be willing again to work the ticket booth for the 2012 Show.

Thanks Again,
Pam Lemke

Silent Auction

Thanks to everyone who assisted with the Silent Auction. Whether it was donations, help, or buying, everyone came together to make a successful event. Thanks especially to Leola, for all your help.

Denise Mebane

Student Day

I just want to thank, all those that helped me with the student day. Everyone was such a great help. Our total for the kids that day was 437. In addition, the adults that came with the groups were almost half the total of the students. I think the wire-wrapping demo went very well. Many people came over, to see and sit and find out what we were doing. Thanks again to all those that helped make the show another great one!

On another note: I am in Alton Calif. pop, 276 people, very quiet. Heading to Patrick's Point tomorrow for some rock hunting and Indian artifacts. Hope all is well back home, take care.

Respectfully submitted by, Les Pagel, VP

SOUTH CENTRAL FEDERATION'S

ANNUAL MEETING:

The Federation's next annual meeting will be held on

August 25-26, 2012

hosted by the

PINE COUNTRY GEM AND MINERAL

SOCIETY, JASPER, TX

Annual Elections will be held during the Nov. business meeting. This is the slate of officers presented by the nominating committee.

2012 Victoria Gem & Mineral Society Ballot

OFFICE	NOMINEE	WRITE-IN
PRESIDENT-----	Dave Snell	_____
1st VICE-PRESIDENT-----	Les Pagel	_____
2nd VICE-PRESIDENT-----	Jay Allison	_____
SECRETARY-----	Patty Shay	_____
TREASURER-----	Ken Lemke	_____
Board Members:		
Howard Camp--1 year		
Bob Clark--1 year		
Leola Camp--2 years		_____
Mary Allison--2 years		_____

Upcoming Shows

November

5-6—AMARILLO, TEXAS: Annual show; Golden Spread Gem & Mineral Society; Amarillo Civic Center-Regency Room, 401 S. Buchanan St.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$3, children under 12 free; prehistoric, outer space, down under, precious, unusual, cheaps, artifacts, valuables, jewelry, Indian jewelry, beads, displays; contact Wanda Finley, 9170 FM 1151 Claude, TX 79019, (806) 944-5464; e-mail: finfran@midplains.coop

5-6—MIDLAND, TEXAS: Annual show; Midland Gem & Mineral Society; Midland Center, 105 N. Main St., corner of Wall and Main; Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4, students (6-18) \$1, children (5 and under) free; dealers, demonstrations, exhibits, silent auction, kids' corner, geode cutting, fluorescent mineral room; contact Tom Wurster, PO Box 5043, Midland, TX 79704, (432) 682-6258 or (432) 230-2566; e-mail: show@midlandgemandmineral.org; Web site: www.midlandgemandmineral.org

11-13—HUMBLE, TEXAS: 58th annual show; Houston Gem & Mineral Society; Humble Civic Center, 8233 Will Clayton Pkwy.; Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7, seniors and students \$6, children under 12 free; displays, working exhibits, fluorescent mineral exhibit, Rock Food Table, swap area, more than 40 dealers, minerals, fossils, jewelry, slabs, rough, spheres, meteorites, beads, petrified wood slabs; contact Theresa Peek, Houston Gem & Mineral Society, 10805 Brooklet, Houston, TX 77099, (281) 530-0942; e-mail: show@hgms.org; Web site: www.hgms.org

19-20—FORT WORTH, TEXAS: Wholesale and retail show; The Bead Market; Amon Carter Exhibit Hall Will Rogers Center, 3400 Burnett Tandy Dr.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; beads, gemstones, vintage beads and buttons, pearls, Swarovski Elements, crystals, lampwork, PMC, seed beads, glass beads, bone beads, jewelry, tools, books; contact Rebekah Wills, (903) 240-7198; e-mail: rebekah@thebeadmarket.net; Web site: www.thebeadmarket.net

December

2-4—EL PASO, TEXAS: Annual show; El Paso Mineral & Gem Society; El Maida Auditorium, 6331 Alabama; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$3, seniors \$2, students \$3, children (under 12) free; gems, minerals, fossils, beads, jewelry, tools, books, equipment, geode cutting, silent auction, demonstrations; contact Jeannette Carrillo, 4100 Alameda Ave., El Paso, TX 79905, (915) 533-7153; e-mail: gemcenter@aol.com; Web site: epmgs.com

"Code of Ethics"

- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without permission from the owner.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind such as fences, signs, buildings, etc.
- I will leave all gates as found.
- I will build fires only in designated or safe places and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material - matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks, or other water supplies.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.
- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field-trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or federation officers, Bureau of Land Management or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule", will use Good Outdoor Manners and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and Public Image of Rockhounds everywhere.

Revised July 7, 1999 at the AFMS Annual Meeting

VGMS Slab Gab
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