# Tips and Trips

## FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING
7:30 PM, Monday, February 17, 2003
Dunwoody Library
5339 Chamblee-Dunwoody Road
770-512-4640

**500 MILLION YEAR OLD SOFT-BODIED FOSSIL PRESERVATION DISCOVERED IN NORTH GEORGIA**

This month, Bill Montante will be our speaker. Bill is Vice President and Senior Consultant with Marsh Risk Consulting, Marsh USA Inc. Bill serves as a Senior Consultant in casualty hazard control to Marsh U.S. and global clients. Bill is also a member of the Cobb County Gem and Mineral Society, amateur paleontologist, and our resident expert on Trilobites.

Bill will be speaking to us on his work in the Conasauga Shale Formation. Bill made a find in the Conasauga Shale Formation of NW Georgia that put that locale on the map as the southern-most site where Mid-Cambrian (505 mya) soft-bodied fossil preservation was confirmed. Bill was determined to put Georgia on the map as one more global site for soft preservation. He joined forces with Dr. David Schwimmer, and the two received a 2-year grant to research the site and confirm the existence of soft-bodied fossils that are roughly contemporary with the famous Burgess Shale site in British Columbia. They recently presented their findings at the Geological Society of America conference in Denver. Bill will describe his awesome fossil adventure working with a professional and the significance of this discovery.

Be sure and join us for this most interesting program.

Note: The meeting is on the **THIRD** Monday this month.

---

### Joan’s Gibberish and Gems
(PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE)

**Gibberish:**

The executive board meeting on January 8th proved to be very productive:

GMS is purchasing a banner to identify us at public activities. We will be hosting a table at the Georgia Science Teacher’s Association annual meeting at Jekyll Island on February 13th – 15th.

The Board is busy revising the By-Laws. Proposed revisions will be published for review by the general membership before adoption.

We have been invited to participate in a Science Education project in Fort Valley, Georgia, on March 8, 2003. We have been offered as much space as we need. We are looking for volunteers willing to demonstrate, bring specimens and explain what they are, talk to the public about GMS, and anything else we can think of to do. We have options for indoor or outdoor facilities. If you are interested in participating, please let Anita Westlake or me know how many tables you will want, if you need power, and if you prefer an indoor or outdoor space. If you would like to have volunteers to assist you, please let me know how many. If you can volunteer to help others, please let me know. We always need people to talk about the club and membership in the club. We have an excellent opportunity to assist Fort Valley in their endeavor to provide the citizens with a fun-filled exposure to Earth Science. Contact either:

- Anita at (404) 761-7849 or libawc@emory.edu
- Joan at (770-478-5734) or jowhite@bellsouth.net

**Gem:**

Footprints on the sands of time are not made by sitting down.

---

See you soon.

Joan White (a.k.a. Waggener)
OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE
To Educate the Youth of the State and the Members of this Society
In the Field of Earth Science

2002-2003 Executive Board

President
Joan White
9146 Sunset Dr.
Jonesboro, GA 30238
770.478.5734
president@gamineral.org

Executive VP/Membership
Carl Ziglin
995 Laurel Mill Dr.
Roswell, GA 30076
770.998.5975
membership@gamineral.org

Vice President/Programs
Jay Gorday
1690 Granger Court
Chamblee, GA
770.986.0822
programs@gamineral.org

Secretary
Carolyn L. Daniels
3600 Prince Way
Tucker, GA 30084
770.723.1359
secretary@gamineral.org

Treasurer
Teresa Curi
405 West Leslie Court
Woodstock, GA 30188
770.751.7313
treasurer@gamineral.org

Tips & Trips Editor
Carolyn L. Daniels
3660 Prince Way
Tucker, GA 30084
770.723.1359
newsletter@gamineral.org

Field Trip Chair
George Libby
1730 Rhett Butler Drive
Lilburn, GA 30047
770.797.2117
fieldtrips@gamineral.org

Mineral Section Chair
Julian C. Gray
524 Robin Lane
Marietta, GA 30067
770.973.3632
minerals@gamineral.org

Gem Section Chair
Kim Cochran
2695 Van Court
Snellville, GA 30078
770.979.8331

December Show Chair
Anita Westlake
1253 Spencer Avenue
East Point, GA 30344
404.761.7849
decembershow@gamineral.org

May Show Chair
Jay Gorday
1690 Granger Court
Chamblee, GA 30341
770.986.0822
mayshow@gamineral.org

Immediate Past President
Bill Waggener
9146 Sunset Dr.
Jonesboro, GA 30238
770.478.5734
wgwaggenerri@bellsouth.net

Trustees
To 2003
Anita Westlake
404.761.7849

To 2004
John Iacullo
770.978.1668

To 2005
Olin Banks
770.948.8444

Committee Chairs
Adopt-A-Highway
Robert Peard
770.936.0180

Assets/Equipment
Open to Volunteers

Awards
Sue Williamson Gorday
770.986.0822

Curator/Gem Box
Kim Cochran
770.979.8331

Facilities
Open to Volunteers

Historian
Holly Camp
770.242.0556

Hospitality
Margaret Ronan
404.636.0720

Librarian
Richard Anderson
770.682.9718

Education
Anita Westlake
404.761.7849

Parliamentarian
Kim Cochran
770.979.8331

Refreshments
Kim/Nicholas Prakash
770.879.0476

Special Events
Bill Waggener
770.478.5734

Sunshine
Teressa Curi
770.751.7313

Tips & Trips Labels
Carl Ziglin
770.998.5975

SFMS Rep.
Frank Decaminada
770.992.8309

The article submittal due date for the March 2003 newsletter is February 10, 2003.

General meetings are held on the first Monday of each month. In the event that the first Monday is a holiday and/or the facilities are not available, the meeting will be held on the third Monday of the month. General meetings are currently held at the Dunwoody Branch of the DeKalb County Library System. Any deviations from the above schedule will be announced in Tips and Trips.

The Georgia Mineral Society on the Internet: http://www.gamineral.org

E-mail Early Notification Program: A field trip and club news update service. To join, members are requested to send in their current e-mail address to e-mail address: gms@gamineral.org.

Announcements for educational publications, continuing education classes, and shows or exhibits are provided in Tips and Trips as a service to GMS members. Appearance of the above in Tips and Trips does not constitute an endorsement by GMS.
DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee
An Official Field Trip of the Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society (Host)
An Official Field Trip of the GEORGIA MINERAL SOCIETY

9:00 A.M., Saturday, February 22, 2003

"Banded Agate"

Site(s): Depending upon conditions and capabilities of participants, we shall go to one or both of two sites; in both cases, there will be hiking involved. At one site, there will be level, easy hiking for about 1.5 miles, followed by searching for agate float in creek beds, or in various draws. Recent heavy rains may increase the material exposure.

At the other site, there will be a fairly strenuous climb up the mountain to about the 1200 foot level; there also, we shall do surface collecting.

These sites are not particularly suited for children and pets.

Meeting Location: Stevenson, AL, off of U. S. Highway 72, about 20 miles northeast of Scottsboro, AL, or about 24 miles southwest of the intersection of Highway 72 and I-24 (South Pittsburgh, TN). There are motels and restaurants in both Scottsboro and at the I-24 exit; allow about 30 minutes to get to Stevenson. There are also plentiful facilities in Huntsville, AL, about an hour and a half Southwest of Stevenson.

Directions: Exit Highway 72 at the Stevenson exit, Highway 117, and proceed to the Stevenson Holiness Church parking lot. You can see the steeple from the Highway 72 exit.

Meeting time: 9:00 A.M. at the church parking lot. We plan to leave the parking lot at 9:15, and it will take about 15 minutes to drive to the hunting area. We shall stop hunting in time to insure getting back to "civilization" before dark.

Equipment: One should need only a rock hammer and something to carry the agates in; a light pick might be useful if going up the mountain. We do not intend to dig holes. Agates may range from a pound to about 7 pounds, so remember that you have to carry back what you pick up. Boots might be advantageous if searching for stream float. Bring plenty of water and a sack lunch; we shall be in a relatively remote area.

For information:
Contact: Lowell Zoller, HG&MS Field Trip Chair
Email: lzoli@knology.net, Telephone: 256.881.4650

GMS ROCK, FOSSIL AND MINERAL FIELD TRIP

10:00 A.M., Saturday, February 15, 2003
Girard, GA

"Savannah River" Agate

TRIP: The Georgia Mineral Society will hold a field trip to Girard, GA for Savannah River Agate/Chert. This material is actually a conglomeration of agate, jasper, chert, and opalite mixed together to form a layered specimen that will tumble or cab into a beautiful display piece. Fossils are not abundant but you may be able to find clams, gastropods, nummulitites, echinoids, bryozoans, turritellas, barnacles and diatoms from 30-35 million years old (Oligocene age). Micro minerals may be found in vugs and cavities of the agate. You may find rare phosphate minerals like clear to pinkish strengite, greenish wavelite and variscite, golden cacaoxenite, brown to yellow brown jarosite, sharp brilliant crystals and green brown fibrous hemispheres of dufrinite, pale chartreuse green spherical globules of kidwellite, black to brown fibrous crusts and spheres of rockbridgeite, white finely fibrous tufts of churchite. The vugs may contain hylaitite opal, limonite, deep red brown hematite, barite, goethite, gypsum, or druzy quartz. There is something for everyone. We will be collecting on a public right of way in the road and road cuts.

BRING: A rock hammer and scratching tool to collect the Agate. If you plan to look for micro minerals you will need some chisels and a sledge to break open some of the larger specimens. You would need eye protection or a face shield and long heavy pants as the agate will be sharp and fly in all directions when hit. A hand magnifier will help looking for micro minerals. Bring your lunch, plenty of fluids, bug spray, sun screen, a hat, gloves, sturdy shoes and lots of 5 gallon buckets to bring your specimens home.

This trip is suitable for children.

Where: The Girard Post Office (just past the Girard Mall on the right).

Directions: Take I-20 east from Atlanta to Augusta and exit onto the I-520 bypass south (Bobby Jones Expressway/SR 232). Drive about 9 miles to SR 56 exit (old Savannah road) and turn right (south). A mile or two after the Burke County line you will turn left onto SR 23 and continue on this road into Girard. The post office will be on the right in the center of town. Allow 3 ½ hours drive time for this 171 mile trip from the intersection of I-20 (east) and I-285.

If a travel advisory is posted between Atlanta and our collecting site this trip will be cancelled.

SPECIAL SIGN UP SHEET AT THE MEETING FOR A TRIP TO BEAR DEN, GEORGIA FOR STAUROLITE

It always been a policy of GMS not to limit the number of persons attending a trip and we will not do this, but you must sign up, call or fax me if you wish to be invited to this site due to non-existent parking. We will be asking if you have space in your vehicle for other members. If you are planning on driving you must be aware that you may scratch your vehicle on the bushes in the area. At this time a date has not been decided upon and if the response is that good we may have to make two or three trips to the site so that everyone will have a chance to collect, so signing up is most important at this time.

Please contact me at one of the following:

Telephone: 770-978-2117
Fax: 770-985-4281
Cell Phone: 678-910-7476
email: Onsiteinatlanta@yahoo.com

George Libby, GMS Field Trip Chair

Forwarded by Jim Flora
**JUNIOR SECTION**

There will be no Junior Section meeting in February. Please check the March 2003 issue of *Tips & Trips* for the date and time of the next meeting. We will try to go on a fieldtrip in March.

*Roxanne Lopez  
Junior Section Chair  
770.436.0387 (work 404.814.4031)*

**MINERAL SECTION MEETING**

There will be a meeting of the Mineral Section on February 20, 2003 at 7:30 P.M. at my house. This is in place of the Micromount Section Meeting for this month. The topic will be cataloging my collection. Everyone (including any micromounters) is encouraged to attend. I have put off cataloging long enough and this will be a chance to see a demonstration of my techniques and give constructive criticism to the effort. I will also be demonstrating my personal mineral database.

**Directions:** Take the South Marietta Parkway east from I-75 (Exit 263). Turn right at the first traffic light (Powers Ferry Road). In about a mile, turn left onto Little John (second left past the John Knox Church). The first left on Little John is Robin Lane. Our house (number 524) is a white brick house on the left.

*Julian Gray, Mineral Section Chair*

**GEM SECTION MEETING**

7:30 P.M., Monday, February 24, 2003  
Home of Anita Westlake  
1253 Spencer Avenue, East Point, GA 30344

Last month we went over a GIA lesson and learned to use the Chelsea filter in order to identify emeralds and other gems. This month Anita will explain and demonstrate making jewelry with dichroic glass.

Please R.S.V.P at 404.761.7849.  
*Hope to see you there,  
Kim Cochran, Gem Section Chair*

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

We are working on a plan to update our membership information. There are actually some who first joined GMS in a previous millennium. If you are one of these members, please be assured that we keep all information confidential. We would never reveal in which previous millennium you joined.

Soon, you will receive a postcard with the information we have for you. When you receive this, please check it for accuracy and complete any missing information.

We hope to see you at one of our meetings, field trips or shows soon.  
*Carl Ziglin, VP/Membership*

---

**SHOWS, SPECIAL EVENTS, AND EXHIBITS**

**February 7-9, 2003.** Merritt Island, Florida - Central Brevard Rock and Gem Club. Annual “Symphony of Gemstones”, Kiwanis Island Park at 950 Kiwanis Park Road. Hours: 7th, 1:00 P.M.-6:00 P.M.; 8th & 9th, 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Contact: Sue Nickolopoulos at 321.453.8024.

**February 7-8, 2003.** Largo, Florida - Pinellas Geological Society, 27th Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show and Sale, Largo Cultural Center, 105 Center Park Drive. Hours: 7th & 8th, 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 9th, 12:00 Noon - 5:00 P.M. Contact: Hugh Sheffield, 2440 Southshore Drive, SE, St. Petersburg, Florida 33705, telephone number: 727.894.2440.

---

**MICROMOUNT SECTION MEETING**

The Micromount Section meeting scheduled for February 20, 2003 is postponed indefinitely due to personal issues. The next meeting will be announced in a future issue of *Tips and Trips*. The Mineral Section will meet this date instead (see announcement this page).

*Dave Babulski, Micromount Section Chair*

---

**FOSSIL SECTION NEWS**

Frustration and disappointment! Those are the feelings of fossil collectors across the South. What is the cause? After four years of relative drought, we are now experiencing rains every few days which increase the water levels in creeks and rivers. In Florida, for example, the Peace River is a prime fossil vertebrate collecting site. The river is five feet higher than in previous years and will take five to six weeks to recede to collecting levels. Quarries and most road cuts are awash in mud. More rain is on the way, so the season is basically gone. This condition mirrors the rest of the South.

The next Fossil Section meeting will be held at the home of Mike Bruggeman on Thursday, March 20, 2003 at 7:30 P.M. The topic will be “Cenozoic Mollusks.” Mike has been hard at work developing software for identifying mollusks of the Southeast. Each frame shows the family, genus, species, epoch, size, and picture of the fossil. This is great work!

Mike’s address is 3820 Ferncliff Road in Snellville - telephone number: 770.985.1030. Come early if possible.

*Friends, like fossils, are forever,  
Harry Yingst  
Fossil Section Chair*
SUNSHINE NEWS

Noel Leitzman, Valdosta, Georgia, has a birthday on February 12th. Now we don’t say he is as old as Abraham Lincoln, but there might be some similarities.

Karen Babulski is having some health problems at this time. We hope that Karen is feeling better soon.

Due to some problems both at home and at work that have come up, Dave Babulski is suspending operation of the Micromount Section and the Micromount Corner in the Tips and Trips. Resumption of the Section activities will be announced in Tips and Trips.

Olin Banks is doing well and feels good. He will be undergoing artery cleanout on January 27, 2003.

Carolyn Daniels (ed.) for Teresa Curl, Sunshine Chair

JANUARY 2003 GENERAL MEETING MINI-MINUTES

The January 2003 General Meeting of the Georgia Mineral Society was held at the Dunwoody Branch of the DeKalb County Library System on January 6, 2003. The meeting was called to order by President Joan White at 7:35. The speaker for the evening, GMS member and geologist with the Fernbank Natural History Museum, Christine Bean, was introduced by Vice President (Programs) Jay Gorday. The presentation was on the “Littlest Giants,” a display at Fernbank.

Visitors and old members were introduced. Bruce Ebers and Nancy Hubner were old members visiting and Mike Wingfield was a new visitor.

Executive Board Members and Committee Chairs gave updates. Teresa Curl is resigning as Sunshine Chair and GMS is looking for a volunteer to fill the position. The next Board meeting was announced for 7:30 P.M. on January 8, 2003 at Anita Westlake’s house. All GMS members are welcome to come. Door prizes were awarded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:48 P.M.

JANUARY 2003 BOARD MEETING MINI-MINUTES

An Executive Board meeting was held at Anita Westlake’s home on January 8, 2003. The meeting was called to order by Joan White (president) at 7:20 P.M. Twelve board members, representing 14 votes, were present. A design for a banner to be used at events (e.g., Family Day at Olympic Centennial Park, etc.) that GMS is using was discussed and voted on. An additional 50,000 stickers will be ordered prior to the Georgia Science Educators meeting in February. GMS will be represented at the meeting and will make stickers available to those teachers requesting them. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to proposing revisions to the Society By-Laws. Proposed revisions will be typed up and presented to Board and then provided to the general membership either via publication in the Tips and Trips or by special mailing. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 26, 2003. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn L. Daniels, Secretary

FERNBANK MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
767 Clifton Rd, NE, Atlanta, GA
404.929.6300
For more information, please visit our website at: www.fernbank.edu/museum

Exhibit News:

The Tiniest Giants: Discovering Dinosaur Eggs (Closes February 2, 2003)
Experience the excitement of the paleontological research team that went to Argentina in 1997 and discovered a treasure of dinosaur eggs, embryos and nests. This bilingual (Spanish and English) exhibition uses dioramas, interactives, and actual fossil specimens to tell the story of these key scientific discoveries: the first-ever sauropod dinosaur embryos, the first-ever dinosaur embryonic skin, and the first-ever sauropod dinosaur nests. Children can pick up a stamp guide and collect stamps at seven stations that feature different members of the expedition team.

Ancient Microworlds (Closes May 1, 2003)
Using high magnification photography, photographers Giraud Foster and Norman Barker bridge the worlds of art and science to reveal the complex patterns of ancient life. This exhibition of 66 fascinating works offers an up-close look at shells, ammonites, dinosaur bones, plant fossils and other remnants of prehistoric life. Brought to life by this innovative photographic technique, the fossils reveal their rich colors, texture and beautiful intricacies.

Now Showing in IMAX:

Lewis & Clark: Great Journey West
Whales
Africa: The Serengeti (Friday nights only, through March 28, 2003)
Martinis and IMAX on Friday nights. Check the website or call 404.370.1822 for film and live music schedules. For advanced tickets, call 404.929.6400.

Upcoming Public Programs:

The Most Prickly Animals in the Sea, a lecture given by Smithsonian Senior Research Scientist Dr. David Pawson. January 28, 2003, 7:00 P.M. Free, but tickets are required, call 404.929.6400. Made possible by the Ford Motor Company Fund.

Geology Lab Open House. Every Thursday 2:30-5:00 P.M. and Third Saturdays 10:00 A.M.–Noon. Call 404.929.6313 for information.

Star Talks. Every Wednesday, 3:30 P.M., Star Gallery.

Super Saturday and Terrific Tuesday preschool programs. Call 404.929.6342 to register.

Christine Bean, Geologist

GRAB BAGS

It is that time of year again. April will be here shortly and we will stuff grab bags for the gem show in May. This year as in the past, I hope to stuff 1,000 bags. If you need material to sew or a bag for a pattern, let me know.

Kim Cochran
### MAY SHOW NEWS

The May Show is just around the corner. Mother’s Day will be here before you know it. Martha Brown has sent out all the dealer contracts and is waiting for contracts and money to be returned.

We still have three positions to fill for the Show Committee. We need someone to coordinate our exhibits, coordinate our demonstrations, and coordinate the Dealer Dinner.

We still need volunteers to help the Chairs with their responsibilities. Over the next few months, we will be asking for helpers and volunteers for the Show. When asked please say YES!!

---

### SFMS WEBSITE

The SFMS (Southeast Federal of Mineralogical Societies) now has a new website and email address. They are:

- [http://www.amfed.org/sfms](http://www.amfed.org/sfms)
- Email: sfms@amfed.org

*Via Lodestar (SFMS newsletter; 08-09/02)*

---

### RECOMMENDED FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF:


Available online at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)

Anyone with a collection of shark teeth knows that identification can be difficult, especially without a comprehensive identification guide. This book is aimed squarely at the amateur collector, with clear photos and concise information for over 80 sharks, living and extinct. All terms are defined and illustrated. The author had a 33-year career with the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, and has collected shark teeth since he was in high school. I was thrilled to find this information compiled into one book and highly recommend it for anyone who collects shark teeth.

*Christine Bean, GMS Member*

---

### REVIEW OF THE JANUARY 2003 PRESENTATION.

The January program was given by GMS member Chris Bean, who is a geologist at Fernbank Natural History Museum. The talk focused on Fernbank’s special exhibit of the large dinosaur egg site discovered recently in Patagonia (Argentina, for the geography impaired). This site has provided many firsts, such as sauropod embryos, fossilized embryonic skin, and sauropod nests. She also spoke about the nest structures, sizes, and the general environment in which they lived. It was also interesting to learn that a baby *Titanosaur*, one of the sauropods found there (and which grew to be the largest dinosaur), was about as big as a human baby. So, if someone says you’re a bit on the large size, you may confidently say you’re not even close.....

*Doug Daniels, GMS Member*

---

### SHOP HINT:

Having trouble getting your specimens clean to see what you really have? After trying your normal solutions, try a regular automatic dishwasher compound such as Cascade. Soak for a day or so in a concentrated solution. Rinse with clear water.

*via Chip and Lick (1/03), via ACHATES (09/02), via Rock Chip Reporter, via Rock Talk (02/02)*

---

### MALACHITE LOVERS BEWARE

To those of you who have heard of soaking your polished cabs in vinegar to remove epoxy, take heed. You could end up with a pretty pile of powder. Having recently polished two cabs of malachite, I put them in vinegar to remove a little epoxy, noticing a couple of hours later that the stones didn’ t look as bright (and they weren’t). So I took a gander at ye olde rock book and sure enough, Malachite is copper carbonate (CuCO$_3$(OH)$_2$) which as any self-respecting rockhound knows, is subject to a corrosive effect, caused by acid (vinegar) even though it is weak. Carbonate minerals, such as dolomite (CaMg(CO$_3$)$_2$) or calcite (CaCO$_3$) are attacked by acids and the carbonate (CO$_3$) is eaten away leaving a pile of mud where your gem was hours before. So before you clean that stone, check to see if it’ s attacked by what you’ re soaking it in or you may not get to wear it.

*Author Unknown via Chip and Lick (1/03)*

---

### SHOP HINT:

Having trouble getting your specimens clean to see what you really have? After trying your normal solutions, try a regular automatic dishwasher compound such as Cascade. Soak for a day or so in a concentrated solution. Rinse with clear water.

*via Chip and Lick (1/03), via ACHATES (09/02), via Rock Chip Reporter, via Rock Talk (02/02)*

---

### MALACHITE LOVERS BEWARE

To those of you who have heard of soaking your polished cabs in vinegar to remove epoxy, take heed. You could end up with a pretty pile of powder. Having recently polished two cabs of malachite, I put them in vinegar to remove a little epoxy, noticing a couple of hours later that the stones didn’ t look as bright (and they weren’t). So I took a gander at ye olde rock book and sure enough, Malachite is copper carbonate (CuCO$_3$(OH)$_2$) which as any self-respecting rockhound knows, is subject to a corrosive effect, caused by acid (vinegar) even though it is weak. Carbonate minerals, such as dolomite (CaMg(CO$_3$)$_2$) or calcite (CaCO$_3$) are attacked by acids and the carbonate (CO$_3$) is eaten away leaving a pile of mud where your gem was hours before. So before you clean that stone, check to see if it’ s attacked by what you’ re soaking it in or you may not get to wear it.

*Author Unknown via Chip and Lick (1/03)*

---

### SHOP HINT:

Having trouble getting your specimens clean to see what you really have? After trying your normal solutions, try a regular automatic dishwasher compound such as Cascade. Soak for a day or so in a concentrated solution. Rinse with clear water.

*via Chip and Lick (1/03), via ACHATES (09/02), via Rock Chip Reporter, via Rock Talk (02/02)*

---

### MALACHITE LOVERS BEWARE

To those of you who have heard of soaking your polished cabs in vinegar to remove epoxy, take heed. You could end up with a pretty pile of powder. Having recently polished two cabs of malachite, I put them in vinegar to remove a little epoxy, noticing a couple of hours later that the stones didn’ t look as bright (and they weren’t). So I took a gander at ye olde rock book and sure enough, Malachite is copper carbonate (CuCO$_3$(OH)$_2$) which as any self-respecting rockhound knows, is subject to a corrosive effect, caused by acid (vinegar) even though it is weak. Carbonate minerals, such as dolomite (CaMg(CO$_3$)$_2$) or calcite (CaCO$_3$) are attacked by acids and the carbonate (CO$_3$) is eaten away leaving a pile of mud where your gem was hours before. So before you clean that stone, check to see if it’ s attacked by what you’ re soaking it in or you may not get to wear it.

*Author Unknown via Chip and Lick (1/03)*

---

### SHOP HINT:

Having trouble getting your specimens clean to see what you really have? After trying your normal solutions, try a regular automatic dishwasher compound such as Cascade. Soak for a day or so in a concentrated solution. Rinse with clear water.

*via Chip and Lick (1/03), via ACHATES (09/02), via Rock Chip Reporter, via Rock Talk (02/02)*

---

### MALACHITE LOVERS BEWARE

To those of you who have heard of soaking your polished cabs in vinegar to remove epoxy, take heed. You could end up with a pretty pile of powder. Having recently polished two cabs of malachite, I put them in vinegar to remove a little epoxy, noticing a couple of hours later that the stones didn’ t look as bright (and they weren’t). So I took a gander at ye olde rock book and sure enough, Malachite is copper carbonate (CuCO$_3$(OH)$_2$) which as any self-respecting rockhound knows, is subject to a corrosive effect, caused by acid (vinegar) even though it is weak. Carbonate minerals, such as dolomite (CaMg(CO$_3$)$_2$) or calcite (CaCO$_3$) are attacked by acids and the carbonate (CO$_3$) is eaten away leaving a pile of mud where your gem was hours before. So before you clean that stone, check to see if it’ s attacked by what you’ re soaking it in or you may not get to wear it.

*Author Unknown via Chip and Lick (1/03)*
**SFMS STAMP PROGRAM**

The SFMS stamp program, founded in 1999, is a volunteer action of member clubs of the Southeast Federation of Gem & Mineral Societies. The purpose of the program is to offer free scholarships to participating clubs. At present, approximately 50% of the clubs in the Federation participate in the stamp program. The only requirement to participate is: The club must be a member in good standing in the SFMS and contribute stamps to the program on a regular bases.

At the end of each October, participating clubs are notified of their eligibility and the number of names they will be permitted to enter in the drawing. The drawing is held at the annual meeting of the SFMS. The number of scholarships awarded each year depends on the amount of money earned from the sale of the stamps. 100% of the proceeds from the sale of the stamps goes toward scholarships to attend Federation Workshops at William Holland or Wildacres. Winners of scholarships have a choice of which school or workshop they wish to attend at no cost, however students must pay their own travel expenses to and from the school. The number of scholarships awarded have steadily grown since this program began. This past year, 10 people won scholarships to attend workshops in 2002. We hope to exceed this number in 2003. It can be done if we receive enough good quality stamps to sell.

Most used postage stamps have some resale value to collectors. Commemorative stamps and foreign bring in the most money, however other good clean definitive stamps only have a marginal value if they are off paper. One thing to consider when saving stamps is, are they desirable as a collectors item.

The stamp collector is looking for the cleanest well center stamp he can find for his collection. Stamps that are torn, have heavy cancellations so as to make the stamp unsuitable, are discarded and no credit will be given to the club.

Each club should appoint one member to act as chairperson for the stamp program. This person will act as a liaison between their club and the SFMS program chairperson. They should encourage all member to save their stamps from their home, office or any other source, strip the paper off to not less then ¼ inch nor more than ½ inch around the stamp (care should be taken not to cut or damage the stamp), and bring the stamps to each meeting. The chair person should then go through the donated stamps and discard any soiled or damaged stamps. When ½ pound or more have been accumulated, forward them to the SFMS Stamp Chairman.

*(ed.: Please give any stamps you have collected for this program to Olin Banks, who will forward them to SFMS.)*

---

**AGES OF AMBERS**

Amber has long been appreciated and traded by the Syrians, Phoenicians, and even the Vikings. The Greeks believed it was solidified sunshine, considered it a precious stone, a jewel, but called it ‘Elektron’ for its ability to attract bits of material if rubbed on cloth. Nero, Emperor of Rome, sent expeditions to buy Baltic amber, to cut as gemstones or to powder for medicines to treat inflammations and muscle spasms.

Amber is a polymerized compound of hydrogen, oxygen, and carbon and contains varying ratios of succinic acid, several resins, and brown volatile oil (amber oil). Polymerization is the process wherein the molecules of sticky resin are linked into larger molecules. This is unlike the fossilization or lithification processes of other organic materials. Amber has a hardness of 2, a specific gravity of 1, and can be melted at 100 degrees Celsius. It can be cooked down to black colophony, or amber pitch. Amber varies in color, being found in blue, red, black, green, and honey-colored.

*Pinus succinifera*, the trees which produced amber resin, existed through the Miocene Age, but not all amber is the same age. Amber occurs in sedimentary rock, or is weathered out of it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Age (myo)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bavarian</td>
<td>225 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>115 to 135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siberian</td>
<td>80 to 115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaskan</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>70 to 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>25 to 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltic</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(ed.: Amber Daniels...........20 years old)*

*Original source unknown, via Hound's Howl (Aiken, SC, 1/03), via The Pegmatite (San Diego, 2/02)*

---

<http://www.amfed.org/sfms>
Let Me Call You Sweetheart

An elderly rockhound and his wife moved to a remote area in the California desert to be near some prime diggings. One day, a man collecting mineral specimens at one of the pits was invited to dinner. During the meal, the old gentleman endearingly prefaced every request to his wife with “Honey,” “Sweetheart,” “Darling,” etc. The guest was impressed as the couple had been married 70 years. While the wife was away in the kitchen, the man said to the old timer, “I think it’s wonderful that after all these years of married life, you will refer to your wife in those terms.” The old rockhound just hung his head and said, “Actually, I forgot her name about 10 years ago!”

From The Lapidarian (11/00) via Hound’s Howl (1/03), via The Pegamatite (2/02)

A.F.M.S. President’s Message

With the coming of cooler weather our thoughts may be less about field trips and more about indoor activities, although I wouldn’t count out field trips altogether. I have been mineral collecting sometime during every month of the year, although I do tend to avoid the northern states in winter. It isn’t easy to find rocks when everything is covered with snow. But winter shouldn’t dampen our enthusiasm just because we can’t go out and collect. Now is the time to look over one’s collection and cull out pieces we don’t want (don’t throw them away; donate them to a club, school, or other worthy cause) or sort and clean the latest acquisitions... I could go on and on. The idea is that there are many indoor activities to keep us busy even when we can’t go out collecting. Now might be a good time to start working on an exhibit for your next show, or to improve one you may already have. I have found that most club members are more than willing to help fellow members with exhibit cases, and you can’t start too soon getting your case ready for the next show. You also have a little more time to relax when you know your case is prepared and you don’t need to scramble like mad the last day before the show!

Other indoor activities many clubs have include swap sessions or auctions; I know my own club has these from time to time, and they can be combined with a picnic in nice weather or a potluck dinner indoors when the weather is not so nice. The most successful clubs have regular social events and they are great for bringing members together at times other than regular meetings. If your club is fortunate enough to have a clubhouse, you can hold the event there; otherwise you may want to check with your regular meeting facility or see if someone has a house or other place large enough to hold the group.

The weather here in Texas has been so wet lately that I have had to follow my own advice; every time I go outside I need my umbrella. However, I anticipate putting an exhibit into the next nearby show and it will be very nice to know I have it ready with new liner material and labels made so all I need to do is take it to the show and set it up. So when the weather isn’t so nice I can work on my case and when it does turn nice again I can go field-tripping and hunt more specimens.

Before I go; I see from the newsletters I receive it seems as though there are many clubs doing just that. I read about all kinds of activities going on and regret that I can’t go to all the shows and field trips. Some of them really sound great. Thanks for all the newsletters and keep up the good work!


THE DOG AND PREHISTORIC TIMES

Some archaeologists think that men and arctic wolves discovered the benefits of living close to each other about 8,500 years ago. No one knows when dogs first appeared in North America, but the oldest dog bones date back to 5,100 B.C. in modern-day Illinois.

Author unknown, from MAGS Rockhound News (Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society, 1/03)
Loud & Clear
from George Loud

Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (S2727; HR 2974)

The Senate bill, with amendment, was favorably reported out of the Committee on Energy and National Resources on October 8, 2002 and placed on the Senate Legislative Calendar as Calendar No. 655. As I write this column, the Senate and House are both recessed and are scheduled to return November 12th for about one week in a so-called "lame duck" session. At the close of that "lame duck" session, the 107th Congress will be history. My contact in the office of Florida Senator George Allen advised me that it is unlikely, but possible, that the bill will actually come up for vote.

On the House side, HR 2974 is still in committee, i.e., the "House Committee on Resources". Although it appears that the legislation will not become law in the 107th Congress, please contact your Senators to state your position. I expect the legislation to be reintroduced into the next session of Congress.

Rockhard Criminals

Last May two rockhound buddies were collecting agatized coral in the Aucilla Wildlife Management Area (WMA) known as the "Coral Lands" or "Western Slough" area in Jefferson County, Florida. They were arrested by an officer of the Fresh Water and Game Commission locally referred to as a "game warden." The rockhounds spent 10 hours in a cold jail cell before being released on bond. This particular WMA is described as having Indian burial mounds within its boundaries and a number of "preserved sites" where the presence of artifacts has been noted. The site of the rockhound dig was neither in an Indian burial mound nor in a "preserved site." The only posted prohibition against collecting covered only Indian artifacts. The rockhounds were charged with violation of the Florida State Criminal Code, specifically " Criminal Mischief," a misdemeanor. The Public Defender’s Office in Jefferson County, Florida advised me in telephone conversation that they knew of no Florida statute or agency rule governing the removal of rocks and minerals from state lands for recreational purposes. Further, I was told that the rockhounds would have a good defense if the case were to be tried because of lack of notice and to doubts as to whether or not the digging of a hole and the removing of rocks amounted to what would be regarded as "criminal mischief." However, the charges were eventually dropped and the matter never went to trial. At present, I know of no statute, agency rule, legal precedent or even stated policy covering collecting of agatized coral or other rocks and minerals on Florida state land. However, we do know that the aforementioned arresting officer is still plying his trade in the Aucilla WMA area and can be expected to treat other collectors he might encounter in the manner described above. Accordingly, unless we can obtain a favorable policy decision from the Florida state agency having jurisdiction over the land, rockhounds should avoid the area.


"Having Fun - Junior Activities"

from Jim Brace-Thompson, AFMS Junior Activities Chair

This is my first column as AFMS Junior Activities Chair, and I’d like to begin by acknowledging a debt we owe to outgoing Junior Chairs Bob and Kathy Miller. Bob and Kathy have done a superb job reinventing and revitalizing the Future Rockhounds of America (FRA) program, which currently has some two dozen affiliated youth groups in clubs across the country. May I be even half as successful in building on this base. Thank you, Bob and Kathy!

What FRA shares with groups like the Boy and Girl Scouts or 4H are enthusiastic adult leaders and role models. But there’s one big thing that distinguishes these other youth programs from our own: Boy and Girl Scouts and the 4H offer kids tangible rewards on an on-going basis in the form of merit badges, pins, and ribbons for achieving a specific set of guided activities. We offer pebble pup trophies for displays at our annual show, but no rewards on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

My guiding philosophy has two underpinnings. First, we learn by doing. Book knowledge is great, but reading 1,001 books won’t create a cab. You’ve got to roll up your sleeves, slice up a rock, and watch your thumbnails disappear as you shape and grind that first special gem! Second, we are motivated by goals that are attainable, especially if we’re given a clear roadmap toward reaching those goals.

It’s with all these thoughts in mind that I’m setting as my personal goal the establishment of an AFMS/FRA rewards program modeled after merit badges. Within the pages of this column over the course of the coming year, I’ll describe a different activity or cluster of activities that children could do either on their own or at a club meeting or workshop and the badge or pin they might earn as a result. For instance, one might be a Mineral Identification award that would involve building one’s own mineral ID kit (with a copper penny, steel nail, streak plate, glass, etc.) and then demonstrating how to use it to identify several common minerals. Another award might be a Lapidary Arts badge or pin that requires planning and crafting a cab, wirewrapped necklace, soapstone sculpture, etc.

I’ll also welcome new ideas from readers and feedback on my own ideas as we go along. By year’s end, I hope that we might have laid the groundwork for perhaps a half dozen merit badges or pins that I could present to the AFMS for discussion and a vote. I believe that such a system of merit badges or pins will accomplish two things at the same time: 1) give junior leaders at local clubs a variety of proven, organized activities that could fill a year, and 2) provide motivation for pebble pups and junior members to work toward earning a tangible reward and learning a satisfying skill while - as always - having fun!


HINT:
To bring out the color of chrysocolla, place the piece in full strength chlorine bleach. Let it soak for as long as it takes. This works well, and brings out some great colors.

From Al Cowan MVMGC, via Chip and Lick (1/03), via The Rockpile (6/02), via The Nickelbasin Rockhound (12/02)