



# **THE GOLDEN NUGGET**

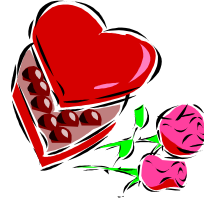
February 2009  
Number 09-02



## **PROGRAM CORNER**

When: February 12, 2009  
Where: Muriel Crump Center, 1735 Highland Ave, Montgomery, AL  
Time: 7:00 P M  
What: KNAPPING by Alton "Sonny" Hall. Demonstration of knapping techniques, tools, and materials as well as discussion of the ancient art of creating stone artifacts.





## REFRESHMENTS

Drinks: David Sherrod Snacks: Morning Sherrod  
Please remember to bring paper plates, napkins, and cups. Ice is available at the community center.

List for remainder of the year:

	Drinks	Snacks
Mar	Mary Lou McHugh	Iris McGehee
Apr	Jim Gaines	Jim Gundlach
May	Harry Corbin	VACANT
Jun	Elise & Terry Toney	VACANT
Jul	Mike Berkman	Linda Griebel
Aug	John & Sandra Nemias	Nemias
Sep	Drucilla Hornsby	Linda Lord
Oct	Thad Cheatham	VACANT
Nov	VACANT	Chela & Cathy Kirkland



## HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY

1 Latongia Watkins  
21 Linda Griebel

22 Brittany Mitchell



## FIELD TRIPPIN'



- Montgomery Gem & Mineral Field Trip on February 21, 2009
- Meet at 12:00 noon in Scottsboro, AL (gathering point will be revealed at February 12th meeting) and travel to Jackson County to collect fossils, paint rock agate, quartz, chalcedony, etc.
- Primitive camping is possible. Need to take lunch and drinks. Location is rocky creek bed which might be wet or dry.
- **VERY IMPORTANT: Let Jeff know at the meeting if you will definitely be going on this field trip or call Jeff "The Stone Hunter" Edwards at 312-0572 for more details after the meeting, but before February 18th.**

- 🗺️ Jeff is also working another long distance field trip in April, most likely April 18th, to South Carolina to collect shark teeth and other fossils. He needs a head count of those who would like to go since he will have to submit a number of participants by April 1. **Reservations required!**
- ❖ Oh, Jeff has a possible surprise planned for March. Watch your inbox...

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## Hello, Rockhounds,

In February, the month of Valentine, “love” is the usual theme of my letter. But since I missed last month’s news letter, I have to catch up. I’m writing this letter using January’s “congratulations and thank you” theme. Sorry. I guess you’ll have to find the love on your own.

Congratulations to everyone on a job well done. Our December show was a success even during these lean times. The Vendor Dinner was expansive and delicious and a good time was had by all. Our Wheel of Fortune project was well received. All 100 bags (plus 10 grand prize bags) sold in the first hour or so and all bought by a small handful of the same children who keep returning to the line. Every dollar won the child a bag and each bag held great prizes.

Those 100 bags netted us \$100.00, returning the cost of the wheel’s construction. From now on, the proceeds will be net to keep. Next year, I would like for us to prepare 1000 bags, creating a \$1000.00 resource for the club. That money might be put to use for expanding our continuing Partnership in Education Program and additional free scholarships or club sponsored fee-paid excursions for members. Please search your treasure troves for items to donate, anything that children might like. Think variety of color, shape, size and pattern. And remember, children love things that sparkle! (*Who doesn’t?*)

Thanks to everyone who presented displays in our display cases. General consensus is that 2008 year was the best ever and I certainly agree. Congratulations to the winners! Of a special note to everyone should be that all four awards went to “first-timers.” So, if you’ve never set-up a display before, then that fact should be a special incentive that you should! Start planning now and bring your “A-game.” This year I have my eye on 1<sup>st</sup> place.

Congrats to David and Morning Sherrod on winning this year’s Montgomery Gem and Mineral Society’s free scholarships to either Wild Acres or William Holland. Their scholarships can be used at either locale during any of the four scheduled Southeast Federation of Mineral Societies’ workshops, each featuring a very wide variety of rock, gem and mineral related classes. Please get your tally sheets now and keep track of your points. Next year YOU could be eligible to win a scholarship.

Congratulations and a very warm welcome to our incoming new officers; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President/Program Chair Thad Cheatham; and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President/Field Trip Chair Jeff “The Stone Hunter” Edwards. I’m sure I speak for everyone when I say how happy and excited I am to have them and in extending thanks to them for their willingness to contribute their time and energy on the club’s behalf.

In closing, I'd like to say a warm "thank you" to those officers who continue to serve (Iris McGehee, Mary Lou McHugh, Mel Barkley and Jim Gaines), and to our very excellent editor Linda Griebel.

Love (there you go!) and Happy Valentine's Day



**Frank Rowell**

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**Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society Minutes** January 8, 2009

The meeting was called to order by President Frank Rowell. Visitors were acknowledged and welcomed. Minutes were read by the secretary, and approved as read.

The Treasurer's report was read by Iris McGehee. The report was approved and filed with the secretary. Iris reminded that dues were due.

Jeff Edwards, Field Trip Chairman announced he is making plans for a trip in February, and he would be sending E-mails when finalized.

The Southeast Federation *Rockhound of the Year* Award was presented to Harold Glover.



Frank reminded that the workshop is open on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays. David and Morning Sherrod turned in the most participation points and were awarded scholarships to William Holland Retreat.

Refreshments were furnished by Terry and Becky Fetzer, and Frank Rowell. The program was Show and Tell.



Members brought a number of items including some finished jewelry. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Mary Lou McHugh Secretary



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## Geology Expert Touts State's Unique Formations

(article from January 16, 2009 MontgomeryAdvertiser.com - contributed by Terry Fetzer)

Giant amphibious creatures, 8-foot-long turtles and large saber-toothed "cats" once roamed in search of food in and around a watery landscape that today is known as Alabama.



John Hall, an expert on geological formations, told a capacity crowd at the state Department of Archives and History on Thursday that prehistoric creatures "ruled" until their disappearance 65 million years ago. "Whatever did it -- be it a meteorite, volcano or something else -- it was profound and destroyed the



ecosystem of the oceans," he said. Hall, retired chief naturalist at the University of Alabama Museum of Natural History and now curator of the new Black Belt Museum at the University of West Alabama, launched a special series of lectures at the Archives building. "The Year of Alabama History" will be observed during the facility's ArchiTreats program held at noon on the third Thursday each month.

Hall's topic was "The Land of Alabama," and he delved into its prehistoric creation, subsequent geological formations and other important developments during the millions of years since dinosaurs disappeared. His animated talk focused on geology and geography, but many in the audience leaned forward when he began to discuss wildlife in the state millions of years ago.

One of his slides illustrated a mosasaur closing in and about to swallow an unfortunate creature that would become its lunch. Mosasaurs were the watery equivalent of the tyrannosaurus rex, the most feared dinosaur on the planet, but it could do something that "Rex" couldn't -- swim.

They were up to 50 feet long, weighed several tons and could maneuver underwater for extended periods of time in search of food, Hall said.

Asked what they liked to eat, Hall said, "whatever they wanted, " and he noted the discovery about 25 years ago of a fossilized mosasaur in the Braggs community of Lowndes County. "They are still piecing it together at the University of Alabama," he said.

Water has been a major part of Alabama's history, and Hall said during an interview after this speech that the site of the state's Capital City "once was in shallow water about 200 feet deep."

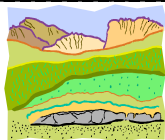
"That's not deep by ocean standards, but that's what this area was like millions of years ago," he said. "At various times in our history, we were the beach."

Hall said Alabama is a unique state because of its various geologic formations created when the North American and African continents split apart during prehistoric periods. In addition to the Gulf of Mexico at the southern end of the state, he said Alabama is situated at the southern terminus of the Appalachian Mountain chain and has important plateau formations throughout.

"We've all heard a lot of hype about Alabama being a diverse state, and it's true," he said. "We are fortunately positioned."



Archives spokeswoman Sherrie Hamil said other experts in their field will appear throughout the year to discuss Alabama's unique history. For details about the upcoming program, call Hamil at 353-4712.



### **WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE SOIL?**



Soil is the naturally occurring, unconsolidated or loose covering on the Earth's surface. Soil is composed of particles of broken rock that have been altered by chemical and environmental processes including weathering and

erosion. Soil is different from its parent rock(s) source(s), altered by interactions between the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere, and the biosphere. It is a mixture of mineral and organic constituents that are in solid, gaseous and aqueous states. Soil particles pack loosely, forming a soil structure filled with pore spaces. These pores contain soil solution (liquid) and air (gas). Accordingly, soils are often treated as a three state system. Most soils have a density between 1 and 2, and weight between 60 and 120 pounds per cubic foot. Soil is also known as earth: it is the substance from which our planet takes its name. Little of the soil composition of the earth is older than Tertiary and most no older than Pleistocene.

Soil color is the first impression that one has when viewing soil. Striking colors and contrasting patterns are especially memorable. Soil color results from chemical and biological weathering. As the primary minerals in the parent material weather, the elements combine into new and colorful compounds. Iron forms secondary minerals with a yellow or red color; organic matter decomposes into brown components; and manganese, sulfur, and nitrogen can form black mineral deposits.

Soil texture refers to sand, silt, and clay composition. Sand and silt are the product of physical weathering while soil is the product of chemical weathering. Soil content is particularly influential on soil behavior due to a high retention capacity for nutrients and water.

Most soils are derived from materials that have been transported from other locations by the wind, water, and gravity. The deeper sections of the soil profile may have materials that are relatively unchanged from when they were deposited by water, ice, or wind.

Soil formation is greatly dependent upon the climate. Seasonal and daily temperature fluctuations affect the effectiveness of water in weathering parent rock material and affect soil dynamics, freezing, and thawing is an affective mechanism to break up rocks and other consolidated materials. Wind moves sand and other particles from one location to another, especially in arid regions where there is no or little plant cover.

Topography affects erosion and depositional rates; water moves material from steep higher elevations to lower, flatter locations. Sediments along river banks, on flood plains and deltas have different textures. Plants, animals, fungi, bacteria and humans affect soil formation. Animals and micro-organisms mix soils and form burrows and pores allowing moisture and gases to seep into deeper layers. In the same way, plant roots open channels in the soils. Micro-organisms, including fungi and bacteria affect chemical exchanges between roots and soil and act as a reserve of nutrients. Humans can impact soil formation by removing vegetation cover which promotes greater erosion and they can mix the different soil layers freely, restarting the soil formation process as less weathered material is mixed with and diluting the more developed upper layers.

Time is a factor in the interactions of all the above factors as they interplay to develop varying types of soils. Over time, soils evolve features dependent on the other forming factors, and soil formation is a time responsive process dependent on how the other factors interplay with each other, as such soils are

always in a state of development or change. Despite the inevitability of soils retrogression and degradation, most soil cycles are long and productive.  
(excerpts SOILS from Wikipedia)

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### **Becky Fetzer's Gluten Free Recipes** (served at the January meeting)

#### Nut Cookies

1 egg white

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup brown sugar, packed

2 cups broken Pecans

Beat egg white until frothy and forms peaks. Add brown sugar. Beat until egg white melts sugar. Mix in pecans. Drop by teaspoonful onto a greased cookie sheet. Bake at 300 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes. Store in an airtight container.

#### Peanut Butter Cookies

1 cup sugar

1 cup peanut butter

1 egg

Mix all ingredients until well mixed. Pinch off into small balls. Put on an ungreased cookie sheet. Flatten slightly with a fork. Bake at 325 degrees for 10 minutes. Yields 3 dozen cookies

#### Corn Flake Macaroons

3 tablespoons butter, melted

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup brown sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup granulated sugar

1 egg

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup nuts

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup coconut

2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups slightly crushed corn flakes

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Blend butter and sugar thoroughly. Add egg and beat well. Add nuts, coconut and cornflakes and mix well. Shape cookies, using a tablespoon and pressing filled spoon against side of bowl. Then drop lightly on a greased cookie sheet. Bake 10 minutes. Makes 2 dozen cookies.

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**Yes, there really is something good to watch on TV!**



**Tuesdays at 8:00:** The History Channel "How The Earth Was Made"

<http://www.History.com>

**Saturdays at 8:00 pm:** Travel Channel "Cash and Treasures" with Kirsten Gum

[http://www.travelchannel.com/TV\\_Shows/Treasure\\_Hunter\\_Kirsten\\_Gum](http://www.travelchannel.com/TV_Shows/Treasure_Hunter_Kirsten_Gum)

or check out this link:

<http://cash-and-treasures->

[wiki.travelchannel.com/page/Rockhounding+for+Dummies?t=anon](http://wiki.travelchannel.com/page/Rockhounding+for+Dummies?t=anon)

### Links to check out

International Colored Gemstone Assn newsletter <http://www.gemstone.org/>  
Georgia Meteorite Association <http://www.meteoriteassociationofgeorgia.org/>  
William Holland <http://www.lapidaryschool.org/schedule.html>

**<http://www.amfed.org/sfms/william-holland-retreat.html>**

Wildacres <http://www.amfed.org/sfms/wildacres-retreat.html>

AI Mineral Locality Index

<http://www.mindat.org/rloc.php?loc=Alabama%2C+USA>

GIA

[http://www.gia.edu/3954/gia\\_home\\_page.cfm](http://www.gia.edu/3954/gia_home_page.cfm)<http://www.greatdanepro.com/somewhere%20in%20time/index.htm>

**Where to find treasure:** [http://www.treasureplaces.com/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://www.treasureplaces.com/index.php/Main_Page)

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### SE SHOWS

(for other areas, click on <http://www.rockngem.com/showdates.asp>)

Feb 20-22 Vero Beach Community Center; 14th Ave. and 23rd St - Fri. 12-5, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; adults \$4, Dave Wayment [tcrandgs@bellsouth.net](mailto:tcrandgs@bellsouth.net)

Feb 21-- Auburndale Beach Club, FL 321 Ramsgate Rd., on Lake Ariana; Sat. 10-5; free admission - Jim Reed, (863) 644-6665 [rocks57@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:rocks57@tampabay.rr.com)  
[www.bonevalley.net](http://www.bonevalley.net)

Feb 27-1-- Melbourne Auditorium, FL 625 Hibiscus Blvd.; Fri. 10-5, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5

(941) 954-0202 [frankcox@comcast.net](mailto:frankcox@comcast.net); [www.frankcoxproductions.com](http://www.frankcoxproductions.com)

March 6-8--LARGO, FLORIDA: Minnreg Bldg., 6340126th Ave. N.; Fr 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; \$5, \$4, Bill Schmidt, (727) 822-8279 [sujagems@aol.com](mailto:sujagems@aol.com);  
[www.sgams.com](http://www.sgams.com)

### Southeast Federation Field Trips

March 28, 2009 9:00-2:00 Memphis Stone & Gravel Company, Arlington, TN  
[www.msgravel.com](http://www.msgravel.com)

Collect chert gravels with fossils, petrified wood, agate, conglomerate, quartz...

Alan Parks (853-6898) (481-9730) [alan.parks@msgravel.com](mailto:alan.parks@msgravel.com) info:  
[www.memphisgeology.org](http://www.memphisgeology.org)

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### SHOP REMINDER

To ensure that someone will be at the shop on the first or third Saturday of each month, please email or contact a board member ahead of that date.

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### DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTALS



Remember to send articles, photos, links, or information for *The Golden Nugget* by the **25th of the current month** for inclusion in the following month's newsletter.

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