



# THE GOLDEN NUGGET

Jun 2006  
Number 06 - 06



*The Official Voice of the Montgomery, Alabama Gem & Mineral Society*

## June Program

**When:** Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.  
**Where:** Mureal Crump Community Center  
1735 Highland Ave.  
Montgomery, AL  
**What:** Fused Glass Jewelry, presented by Anita Westlake, member of GA Mineral Society & Friends of Mineralogy.



## Refreshments



Frank Rowell will provide the drinks and Jean M<sup>c</sup>Donald will provide the snacks for the June meeting.

Next month's snacks will be provided by Clara Glover, drinks, and Iris M<sup>c</sup>Gehee, snacks.

Please remember to bring paper plates, napkins and cups. Ice is available at the community center.

## Happy Birthday!



Becky Fetzer - 4th  
Terry Fetzer - 24th

## June Fieldtrip



**What:** Panning for gold!

**Where:** Sougahatchee Creek (near Reeltown)

**When:** June 10<sup>th</sup>

**What to bring:** Tools for panning!

**Directions:** See map on page 5.

**Warning!** You will get at least your feet wet!



## Workshop Saturdays

Remember the workshop is open on the first and third Saturdays of each month. It's your workshop, so take advantage of the opportunity to utilize the facility. This month the workshop will be open the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.



**Remember to fly your flag on Flag Day, June 14<sup>th</sup>.**



## **A Little About Petrification**

By Michael Papay

Have you ever wondered how petrification occurs? How does wood turn into stone? In so far as I can tell, there are several events that occur in this process.

Aside from the fact that the trees must first grow to provide the wood, the first step in the process of petrification is burial. The wood must be deeply buried either while still standing or soon after falling in order to prevent its destruction by the activity of ants, beetles, termites and fungi. The environment in which the wood is buried must also be anoxia (without oxygen), otherwise microorganisms would soon destroy the wood.

The matrix encapsulating the deeply buried wood must be rather firm in the sense that it not be too plastic. A thick mud would not be stable enough to maintain the shape of the wood through the vagaries of time. Instead, the matrix would have to be rather like porous concrete or consolidated sand. The porosity is important because porosity allows the introduction of water.

Once the wood is deeply buried in a consolidated, porous matrix in an anoxic environment it can only be transformed from wood to stone if quartz and water are present under the right conditions. No quartz, no water, no petrified wood. Fortunately, quartz is a common and abundant mineral, and even the deserts have their days in the rain. And as the fallen rain passes down through the ground, it picks up and carries a little quartz dissolved in its waters. This solution then permeates the buried wood. Now the miracle happens. A little wood dissolved into the water and a little quartz is deposited in its place; and the water moves on its way carrying away a little carbon, leaving behind a little quartz.

The slow process of removing organic material while depositing quartz may take thousands of years to reach completion. In fact, petrification may not reach completion before the favorable conditions end.

If you have collected petrified wood in the field you will know first hand that not all specimens are the same. The most sought-after petrified wood are specimens in which the process went to completion leaving behind highly agatized or opalized wood. These specimens can be sawed and the sawed ends given a mirror polish to reveal the beauty of the specimen. Specimens too small for sawing are tumbled to mirror finishes which are highly attractive.

Wood that is not agatized or opalized may be shunned by collectors that fail to see the rugged beauty of the uncut, unpolished specimens. Other collectors favor these exquisite specimens as fossils of a bygone age and as natural works of art wrought by nature and not the hand of man.

Believe it or not, some portions of a specimen may be preserved as the original wood while other portions of the same specimen are lignified or petrified to various degrees. While the rockhound may not appreciate these specimens, scientists may rejoice over the intact wood for it may reveal through their methods the ancestry and biology of the tree which otherwise they could never behold.

--from Rockhound Roundup, date unknown via Gem Cutters News, 02/2006, via Hound's Howl, 03/2006



### **Southeast Federation (Phase 1)/AFMS Convention**

Hosts: Middle Tennessee Gem Society

Nashville, Tennessee

Show: August 18-20, 2006

Convention: August 15-20, 2006

### **Southeast Federation (Phase 2)**

Hosts: Montgomery Gem and Mineral Society

Montgomery, Alabama

December 1-3, 2006



## Upcoming Shows

**June 3-4, 2006**, Birmingham, AL - Alabama Mineral and Lapidary Society. 33rd Annual Tannehill Gem and Mineral Show. From Birmingham: Take I-20/59S. To Exit 100. From I-450: Take Exit 1 and follow the signs. Hours: Both days, 9:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Contact: Rick Kittinger at [rick.kittinger@bellsouth.com](mailto:rick.kittinger@bellsouth.com).

**June 10-11, 2006**, Alexander City, AL – Lake Martin Rock & Gem Club. 44th Annual Gem & Mineral Show, Windcreek State Park.

**June 9-11, 2006**, Charlotte, NC - Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club. 39th Annual Gem Jewelry, Mineral Show and Sale, Charlotte Merchandise Mart, 2500 East Independence Blvd Charlotte, NC. Hours: 9<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.; 10<sup>th</sup>: 10:00 A.M. - 7 P.M.; 11<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. Admission; \$3.50 for Adults, Seniors & Students \$2.50. Club web site [www.CharlotteGem.com](http://www.CharlotteGem.com).



## General Information

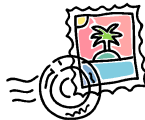
The purpose of the Golden Nugget is to inform members of news about gems and minerals along with news about club, state, and regional activities of interest to our members. Most important, the Golden Nugget provides a way for each of us to share information about projects and to pass on tips that will help others enjoy our hobby. Unless members are willing to contribute, *The Golden Nugget* cannot meet this latter purpose.

Copyright 2006 by Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society, Inc. Except for items that are specifically copyrighted by their authors, all material in this bulletin may be freely copied. Please give credit to *The Golden Nugget*.

Meetings of the Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society are held every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Mureal Crump Adult Center, 1735 Highland Avenue, Montgomery, AL. The annual gem show replaces the December meeting. Anyone interested in gems and minerals is invited to attend. Field trips, workshops, and classes are held at various locations. These are announced at monthly meetings.

The Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society is a member of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.

In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. section 107, this material is distributed without profit or payment to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving this information.



**Don't forget to save and bring in those stamps and Box Tops for Education too!**



**We still need members to sign-up to bring drinks for September's and November's meetings. Also, need a member to bring snacks for the October meeting.**



# MONTGOMERY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY MINUTES

May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2006

The meeting was called to order by Iris M<sup>c</sup>Gehee. She said that she had talked to James Easterling and that they are still hoping that the plant will remain open.

One visitor was present, Sam Beckum.

The minutes were approved as published in the Golden Nugget.

The treasurer's report was read by Iris M<sup>c</sup>Gehee, which was approved and filed with the secretary.

Harold Glover reported on the status of the workshop.

David Sherrod asked for suggestions for field trips.

Sonny Hall announced that he would be demonstrating knapping at Coliseum Library June 8.

Iris reported that the Show Committee had received 16 contracts.

Frank Rowell brought favors to be used for Southeast Federation attendees in December.

Tree limbs endangering the workshop roof were removed and a motion was made to reimburse Iris in the amount of \$300.00. The motion was approved.

Refreshments were furnished by Harry Corbin and Randy Hirst.

After a showing of a video on American Gemstones, the meeting was adjourned.

Mary Lou M<sup>c</sup>Hugh  
Secretary



## Club Officers

President: James Easterling, 875-3089  
1st Vice Pres.: Laura Hirst, 590-6946  
2nd Vice Pres.: David Sherrod, 285-5537  
Secretary: Mary Lou M<sup>c</sup>Hugh, 272-1817

Treasurer: Iris M<sup>c</sup>Gehee, 262-7275  
Director: Harold Glover, 285-3501  
Director: Terry Fetzer, 271-6849





Terry L. Fetzer, Editor  
The Golden Nugget  
Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society  
1837 Heatherton Drive  
Montgomery, AL 36106  
Email: GoldenNugget@Knology.Net

**Buy, Use and Save  
Commemorative Stamps**



# ***The Golden Nugget***



The Official Voice of the Montgomery, Alabama Gem & Mineral Society