



# THE GOLDEN NUGGET

Nov/Dec 2006  
Number 06 - 11



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

## Nov Program

**When:** Thursday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m.  
**Where:** Mureal Crump Community Center  
1735 Highland Ave.  
Montgomery, AL  
**What:** Show planning and preparation.  
Election of club officers.



## Refreshments



Linda Lord will provide the drinks and Randy Hirst will provide the snacks for this month's meeting.

There will be a sign-up list at the meeting for refreshments for next year. Please sign up to bring either snacks or drinks. If **everyone** signs up, we can fill up the schedule for the whole year.

## Happy Birthday!



**Hendricks, Monica - 11/03**

**Laura Hirst - 11/23**

**Tatum, Julie - 12/01**

**Randy Hirst - 12/08**

**James Easterling - 12/17**

## Kits for Junior High Classes



The rock, mineral and fossil kits for the junior high classes have been purchased and contain the following items:

1. Rocks & Minerals of the U.S. Deluxe Collection (64 mineral & 36 rocks specimens)
2. Advanced Fossil Collection (30 fossils specimens)
3. National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Rocks and Minerals
4. Audubon Field Guide to North American Fossils Pocket Naturalist Geology
5. e.guides Rock and Minerals: The book that safely connects you to the worlds best Web sites

## 5.47-carat Diamond Found in Arkansas



On Oct. 14th Bob Wehle found a bright yellow diamond with no visible flaws at the Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro, Arkansas. Just the month before, a Texas couple found a 6.35-carat brown diamond. The largest diamond found in the park was the Uncle Sam, a white diamond that weighed 40.23 carats and was found in 1924. Visit the park on the web at <http://www.craterofdiamondsstatepark.com/>.

Terry Fetzer



**ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!**

It's hard to believe that a year has passed, and that we are only about a month away from this year's Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show. Following the business session at the November meeting, we will be devoting the program time to finalizing plans for the show. The show begins with the set up of the dealers' dinner and the showcases on Thursday morning, November 30<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 a.m. and concludes after the show ends on Sunday night, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Each member is expected to commit work time, not only at the dealers' dinner, but also at least 2 hours, preferably more (if possible, and doesn't have to be consecutively) during the weekend at the information table and/or the demonstration table. This is our primary source of income, and we need everyone's cooperation in making the show a success.

The hours of the show will be: Friday – 9:00 – 6:00 (Students' Day – 9:00 – 2:00); Saturday, - 10:00 – 6:00; and Sunday – 11:00 – 5:00. Please choose the hours you will agree to work and be prepared to sign up for the information and/or demonstration tables at the meeting. **IF YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BE AT THE NOVEMBER MEETING**, please notify Iris McGehee at 262-7275 when you can work. Also, write the time down when you agree to work (forms will be available at the meeting). Everyone involved is too busy during the weekend to phone you to remind you of your obligations.

The dinner will be at 6:00 on Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. The club will provide the meat, coleslaw, potato salad and bread. We will be serving approximately 150 people, so plan to prepare large enough servings (double or triple recipes) to help feed this number. Plan to bring a casserole or desert. We naturally need more casseroles than deserts. If you cannot cook a casserole, Sunday Dinner has a large variety at reasonable prices that you might purchase. Also, if you cannot cook and do not want to purchase something to bring, we will need tea (both sweetened and unsweetened) and lemonade. Sign up at the meeting what you will bring. Here again, **if YOU ARE NOT GOING TO BE AT THE NOVEMBER MEETING**, call me at 262-7275 and let me know what you can be depended on to bring. **THESE DISHES NEED TO BE AT THE COLISEUM NO LATER THAN 5:30 ON November 30<sup>TH</sup>.**

We have 15 showcases which have been freshly painted, and they are just begging for someone to fill them. Make plans to put something in a case. These will be judged during the show and ribbons will be awarded. The size of each showcase is: 31 inches long, 12 ½ inches high and 11 ¼ inches deep. Some of you have beautiful mineral specimens, beading, wire wrapped jewelry, gem trees, cabochons, faceted stones, fossils, arrowheads, or any lapidary art items, so plan to display to the public what you can do. (When others see these items on display, it might create an interest in joining the Club.) This year we will be having visitors from the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies Annual Meeting, and they will be interested in seeing what our members can do. Remember to label items put in the cases, so everyone can see exactly what the item is that you are displaying.

Hope to see you at the meeting on November 9<sup>th</sup>.

Iris McGehee

# Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society Minutes

## October 12, 2006

The meeting was called to order by Iris McGehee. She welcomed visitor David Echols.

The minutes were approved as published in the Golden Nugget with the addition of the appointed Nominating Committee: Frank Rowell, Sonny Hall and Judie Tatum.

The Treasurer's Report was read by Iris McGehee which was approved and filed with the secretary.

Iris reported on an email from James Easterling stating his work schedule does not allow him to attend club meetings.

Field Trip Chairman, David Sherrod, is in Arkansas crystal digging.

Frank Rowell reported that the Nominating Committee is making good progress in securing officers for 2007.

Iris reminded those who had exhibits at the Fair that pick-up time is October 16, 1:00 - 7:00 and October 17, 7:00 - 1:00.

Iris announced the first Pascagoula show since Hurricane Katrina is November 10-11 with free admission and free parking.

A motion was made to award Education kits approximately \$100 each to two junior high classes - Mr. Eckerman's at Brewbaker and Ms Ellen Webber's in Dothan.

A discussion about show yard signs ensued. Iris will obtain signs.

November meeting will be planning and assigning responsibilities.

Christmas party will be Friday, December 15, at Capitol Heights Methodist Church.

Iris asked that those using the workshop to please not turn off main electrical switch when closing.

It was suggested that a banner be made to be placed in the demonstration area. Iris will obtain prices.

It was announced that Jean McDonald had been selected employee of the month where she works - State Retirement Department.

Jean also announced that the Fort Toulouse reenactment will be November 1 - 4.

Due to technical difficulties the video Weird Rocks and Minerals could not be shown. However, Randy Hirst had a few items that he was able to share.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Mary Lou McHugh,  
Secretary

## Meteorite Found in Kansas



Meteorite hunters Steve Arnold and Philip Mani and a team of scientists using new ground penetrating radar found a 154 lbs meteorite that measures 18 by 12 by 12. The meteorite was found in a wheat field outside of Greensburg, Kansas in an area known as the Brenham field or Brenham fall. The meteorite was buried 4 feet underground and was found approximately ¼ mile from where, just last year, Arnold and Mani had found the world's largest pallasite meteorite, a 1,400 pound monster.

Terry Fetzer



## Gem Care and Handling

Although gemstones are among the most durable of substances, they do need some care. Following a few general rules will make sure that they last for generations still looking like the day you bought them.

First of all: keep them clean! Rings in particular tend to collect dust and soap behind the stone, particularly if you wear them all the time. To clean transparent crystalline gemstones, simply soak them in water with a touch of gentle soap. If necessary, use a soft toothbrush to scrub behind the stone.

Even the hardest gemstone variety can be vulnerable to breakage if it has inclusions that weaken the crystal structure. Exercise common sense: if you have a ring set with a softer gem variety or an included stone, take it off before strenuous exercise.

Diamonds are very hard but can shatter in two with a single well-placed blow. Rubies and sapphires are the toughest gems but even they can chip if hit sharply.

Think twice before putting gems in an ultrasonic cleaner. Diamonds and rubies and sapphires will be fine but many other gems may not be: when in doubt, leave it out. Diamonds, rubies and sapphires, and other single-crystal gems can be cleaned with a touch of ammonia in water to remove all films and add extra sparkle.

Opaque gemstones like lapis lazuli, turquoise and malachite require special care. Never use an ultrasonic cleaner and never use ammonia or any chemical solution. These gem materials should just be wiped clean gently with a moist cloth. These gemstones can be porous and may absorb chemicals, even soap, and they may build up inside the stone and discolor it.

The reason why these materials need more care than transparent gemstones is that these materials are essentially rocks, not crystals of a single mineral. Think about it: when you put a rock in water, it absorbs the water and is moist all the way through. A single crystal gem like sapphire will not absorb water: all the molecules are lined up so tightly in the crystal that there is no room for water to enter.

Opals also require special care. Never use an ultrasonic, never use ammonia, and avoid heat and strong light which can dry out the water in opals.

Organic gems like pearls, coral, and amber should only be wiped clean with a moist cloth. Due to their organic nature, these gems are both soft and porous. Be careful about chemicals in hairspray, cosmetics, or perfume: they can, over time, damage pearls in particular.

Store each piece of gemstone jewelry separately so that harder stones don't scratch softer ones. Almost every gemstone is much harder than the metal it is set in. Gems can scratch the finish on your gold, silver or platinum if you throw your jewelry in a heap in a drawer or jewelry box.

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## Upcoming Shows

**Nov 24<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>, Mobile, AL – Mobile Rock & Gem Society.** 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Rock & Gem Show, Greater Gulf State Fairgrounds, Zeigler & Cody, Mobile, AL. Hours: 24<sup>th</sup>, 2PM-7PM; 25<sup>th</sup>, 9AM-6PM; 26<sup>th</sup>, 10AM-5PM. **Admission:** \$3.00, Children under 12 free with Adult.

**Dec 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>, Montgomery, AL – Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society.** 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show. Garrett Coliseum. Hours: 1<sup>st</sup>, 9 am – 7 pm; 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10 am – 6 pm; 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11 am – 5 pm. Contact: Jane Barkley, 334-277-2722. **FREE!**

**Dec 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, Norcross, GA – Georgia Mineral Society.** 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show. N. Atlanta Trade Center, 1700 Jeurgens Ct. Hours: 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, 10 am – 7 pm; 10<sup>th</sup>, 12 noon – 5 pm. **FREE!**

**Dec 9<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, Nashville, TN – Middle Tennessee Gem & Mineral Society.** 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Earth Treasures Show. Creative Arts Bldg, Tennessee State Fairgrounds. Hours: 9<sup>th</sup>, 9 am – 6 pm; 10<sup>th</sup>, 10 am – 5 pm. **Admission:** \$3.00, Children under 12 free with Adult.



## 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.

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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.



## 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

**HAPPY THANKSGIVING / MERRY CHRISTMAS / HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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

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