The official bulletin of the Dothan Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.

Rockhounds Herald

920 Yorktown Road, Dothan, AL 36301-4372

www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

December 2016

Tanzanite $Ca_2Al_3(SiO_4)_3(OH)$ Tanzanite $Ca_2Al_3(SiO_4)_3(OH)$
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Words from…

The President

Well, the holidays are upon us, as are the elections for club officers. We will need to replace several officers this year, so please think about volunteering for one of the spots. As of right not, it looks like we will need a Newsletter Editor, a Vice President, and a Hospitality Chair. We will select and vote during our Christmas party on Saturday, December 17th.

I checked the Hogg Mine website and it looks like they are going to have at least one dig a month throughout 2017. They will also schedule special digs for groups, but I don't know if we can get enough people together to meet the minimum requirement. Our Field Trip Chair, Garry Shirah, is working on a few other opportunities for the club. We need to do better at supporting the digs, as it takes quite a bit of effort to arrange them.

I hope most of the group was able to go to the Montgomery show. I missed it this year, as I had other commitments, but I do plan to go to the Panama City show in January. The PC show is going to be held January 23rd & 24th at their usual place at the Fairgrounds. If you went to Montgomery and collected some great treasures, bring them to the Christmas party for some Show & Tell.

Hope to see everyone on the 17th. Remember, we'll meet at noon and eat at 1:00 PM. If you'd like to participate in the gift exchange please bring something valued at $15 - $20.

Pat

Announcement

Membership Dues – Time again to pay your annual club dues. Diane Rodenhizer will be accepting checks and cash from now until the February 28 meeting. If you can't make it to the Christmas party or at least one of the next two meetings, please send a check (no cash, please) to: Diane Rodenhizer, 478 Private Road 1106, Enterprise, AL 36330.

Upcoming Shows

January 13 – 15	**Pinellas Geological Society**	**Largo, FL**
January 21 – 22	**Tomoka Gem & Mineral Society**	**Deland, FL**
January 21 – 22	**Panama City Gem & Mineral Society**	**Panama City, FL**

Source: http://www.amfed.org/sfms/club-shows-123.html

Meeting Minutes – November 2016 – by Secretary

Call To Order and Cold Open: We had a meeting. It was on 11/27/2016. It was started at 14:10 by president, Pat LeDuc. There were 17 members and no guests. Birthdays were wished. A moment was observed for Abby Pollan's mom who passed a few days back.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: Diane Rodenhizer showed her new postcard mailers, and handed out samples. Mmm, that's nice Diane! The annual Montgomery Rock Show is next weekend, and the Franklin, TN show is coming up on the 11th and 12th of December. $4 bucks to get in to the Franklin show? Wow, aren't they special. And Ken Johnson has had knee replacements and would welcome calls. The group acknowledged the great display Arnie Lambert put together for the church. Wonderful specimens!

CORRESPONDENCE: AFMS Newsletter and that is about it.

MINUTES & TREASURER'S REPORT: The minutes from September were approved and seconded, as if there was any doubt about that bit of rubber stamping. Diane presented her Glowing Treasurer's Report. We have money for the show expenses and are sitting in the catbird seat.

OLD BUSINESS: The matter of the overhead projector redux and again: Arnie has a lesson coming up soon from the church's AV Club.

SHOW BUSINESS: Show looks to be sold out of tables, and Jeff DeRoche is collecting the last of those fees. Contracts are out and starting to come back to Jeff. All is well. Jeff noted that the Mobile show is short on vendors, while we are doing quite well.

NEW BUSINESS: Since our December meeting would have occurred on Christmas Day, it has been cancelled and we will instead have our Christmas Party on Saturday, December 17. Meet at noon, eat at 1:00 PM, here at the church. We welcomed our new members who were formerly affiliated with the Lynn Haven and/or Panama City clubs. These members have been added to our various club lists. A big thank you to Joan Blackwell for bringing in the Pensinger family. Pat circulated a list to double check who does NOT have email, and who needs to be called regarding short notice announcements of future digs and other events. The colossal success of the last Pea River Petrified Wood Field Trip was discussed and rates a special note – participation could be described as 100%! The fossil McDonald's hamburgers collected are unique! Nearing the end of the year, the question of the 2017 officers was raised. Most will remain, but Joan may be retiring and moving to north Alabama. Looks like someone will be drafted for the post of Newsletter Editor. Dead silence descended on the room, which is a sign that the fix is in.

PROGRAM & SHOW AND TELL: No program was presented. For Show & Tell, Pat had some items from the last Florida dig. Ken Wilson had pieces from Florida and from the Arnie Dig. Ben Childress had a large group of fossils he acquired at the recent Mobile show and spent some time helping us understand what time period they were from and how to recognize similar pieces.

The meeting wrapped up with food and the presentation of a door prize, which went to Arnie.

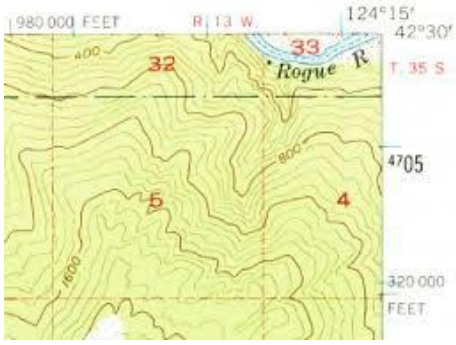
Respectfully submitted by B. Fizzell

How to Spot Areas to Pan for Gold

Gold maintains its value, making the search for raw gold well worth the effort for hobby gold-seekers. The general rule in finding gold is this: Where it was found before it will be found again. Hobby prospectors generally pan for gold while people intent on finding gold in large quantities utilize sluice boxes and rockers to move more stream material. Whatever the method used, the gold-seeker first needs to understand where gold can be found in a stream.

Things You'll Need

- Gold pan
- Topographical maps
- Study topographical maps of an area to learn the country and the terrain through which potential gold streams run.
- Walk along the stream bank and search out pools of water below rapids and eddies behind rocks.



- Seek out quiet water below rapids. Gold tumbles along with the swift current and then sinks to the stream bottom when it reaches quiet water.
- Dig into cracks in submerged bedrock. Gold falls into the cracks as the current pushes it along with other stream material.
- Pan for gold in pools of still water where dirt has been washed off the hillsides and into the stream.

Tips & Warnings

- Gold has, throughout history, been sought in many streams, rivers and creeks in the United States. Concentrate gold-hunting efforts on streams that have a history of having gold in them.
- Gold is heavy, therefore it settles deep into the sand and sediment on the stream bottom. Dig deep into the sand in the places where gold settles.
- Most public lands allow hobby gold panning, but it's still a good idea to check the regulations for the area you plan to work.

- Permission must be obtained to go onto private property. Often, private land borders public land.
- Many mining claims exist along streams; do not pan an area that is claimed.

How to Separate Gold From Dirt

One of the easiest and most inexpensive ways to separate gold from dirt is through panning. This age-old technique has been around since the Gold Rush, and makes a great outdoor hobby that can pay for itself. With a minimum of equipment, the beginner gold prospector can separate gold flakes and nuggets from the surrounding strata in a nearby stream. The supply of gold is virtually endless, as erosion constantly causes hidden gold to be brought to the surface where it is free for the taking. All you have to do is find it.

Things You'll Need

- Plastic, grooved gold pan
- Classifier
- Tweezers
- Small, lidded container
- Select an appropriate stream. Either choose a stream on publicly owned land, or ask the private owner’s permission before doing any panning. Quickly moving streams are best, because the clear water prevents sediment from obstructing your view of the gold. The stream should be at least 6 inches deep so you can keep your pan submerged for the majority of the process.

- Find a promising spot within the stream itself. Sandbars or plant growth on the inside bends are possible places for gold to have washed up with other sediments. You can also determine a promising location by tying small lead weights to inflated balloons with 2 to 3 feet of fishing line, then releasing them into the stream. The place where they settle is where gold is likely to be found.
- Place the classifier, which looks like a large sieve, on top of your pan. This will keep larger pieces of rock from cluttering up the inside of your pan and make gold nuggets easier to identify.

- Fill your classifier with loose gravel and dirt using a shovel. Once it is almost full, place the pan and classifier together under water, and move them in a circular motion to allow light sediment to float away and the heavier material to sink to the bottom of the pan.
- Break up any chunks of dirt or clay with your fingers, being careful not to let any material escape.
- Leave the pan under running water. When the rocks on top are washed clean, pick up the classifier and sift through it with your fingers for gold nuggets. Gold is easily recognizable by its bright yellow color that glistens in the sun. If there are no nuggets, toss the material in the classifier aside.
- Stratify the material in your pan by shaking it gently back and forth under running water. The gold will sink to the bottom.
- Lift your pan so it is partially above the water. Tilt it away from you, being careful to keep the bottom lower than the tilted edge. Water should be able to flow freely in and out of the pan. Using a circular movement from the shoulders down, wash sediment out of the pan, always keeping it submerged except for the side closest to you.
- Tap the sides of the pan occasionally to help the gold settle on the bottom as you continue with step 8. When there is only a small amount of sediment remaining, rub a magnet inside the bottom of the pan in a circular motion to remove the heavy, iron-laden black sand from the gold, which is not magnetic.
- Lift the pan further up out of the water for more precision as you shake the pan back and forth to remove the rest of the fine sand. Once the gold has reached the first groove in the pan, remove the pan from the water completely, leaving about 1 inch of water in the bottom of the pan.
- Tilt the pan repeatedly in a gentle, circular motion to draw the remaining sand away from the gold, which will be concentrated at one edge of the pan.
- Remove the larger pieces of gold by hand and pick out the flakes with tweezers. Put them in your container.

Tips & Warnings

- Don’t look for gold in a privately owned area without first obtaining permission. You could get jailed for trespassing, or even shot if gold claim owners take the law into their own hands.

Source: “How to Separate Gold From Dirt” by Robin Elisabeth Black (originally published on ehow.com).

Some Places You Can Go for Gold

Alabama

Gold has been found throughout Talladega, Tallapoosa, Chambers, Coosa, Clay, Chilton, Elmore, Cleburne, and Randolph Counties.

Alabama Gold Camp
1398 County Road 5
Lineville, AL 36266
256-396-1389
alabamagoldcamp.com/home

Georgia

Gold has been found throughout Lumpkin, White, Cherokee, Dawkins, Pickens, Forsythe and Paulding counties

Crisson Gold Mine
2736 Morrison Moore Parkway East
Dahlonega, GA 30533
706-864-6363.
crissongoldmine.com

North Carolina

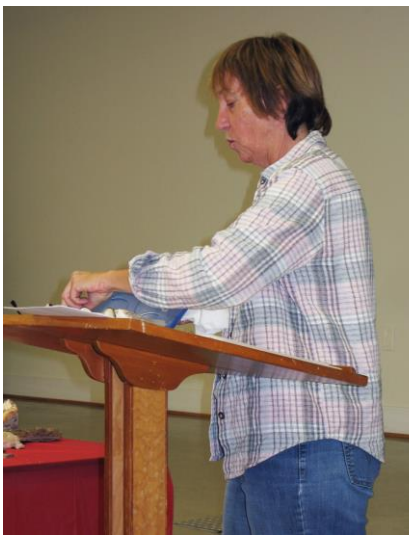
Gold has been found throughout Granville, Person, Caswell, Union, Meckenburg, Gaston, Randolph, Davidson, Stanly, Cabarrus and Union counties.

Reed Gold Mine
9621 Reed Mine Road
Midland, NC 28107
704-721-4653
reedmine.com

Note: Other than designated commercial/tourist site, the vast majority of the gold bearing areas are on private property. Always seek out permission from landowners before doing any prospecting.

Club Meeting – November 2016

Photos by Pat & Bruce



Some great stuff!

Club Meeting – November 2016

Photos by Pat & Bruce

Kid's Corner

Crayon Rock Cycle Experiment

Did you even wonder why some rocks are round and smooth while others are broken up into small pieces? Maybe you've even discovered a rock in your backyard that's made up of several layers. If so, you've just seen the three types of rocks that make up the rock cycle. The best way to understand how the rock cycle works is to re-create it using a box of ordinary crayons. Ask your mom, dad or other adult to act as your scientific assistant: This crayon rock cycle experiment will require their supervision and help.

Problem:

How does a rock change from an igneous rock, sedimentary rock, metamorphic rock, and then back into an igneous rock?

Materials:

- Box of crayons
- Wax paper
- Cheese grater
- Double broiler
- Crayon mold
- Notebook
- Pencil

Procedure:

1. Remove the paper around each crayon in the box and throw it away, so only the colorful wax is left. Set the crayons on a sheet of wax paper.

2. **Observe**—look carefully—at your crayons. What shape are they? How do they feel? They're now in the igneous rock stage.

3. Divide a page in your notebook into three separate columns. Label the first column Igneous Rock. List all the things you noticed about the crayon earlier. For example, you may write that the "igneous rock" feels smooth and hard. If it'll help you remember, draw a picture of your "igneous" crayons in your notebook.

4. Set your cheese grater on top of the wax paper and start grating your crayons, being careful not to cut your finger. Have an adult help you when the crayon gets small; you'll be left with a pile of crayon shavings.

5. Label the second column in your notebook Sedimentary Rock. List everything you observe about the crayon shavings. How are they different than crayons? Do they stick together, or fall apart? Write your notes and draw any pictures in your second column.

6. Scoop the crayon shavings in a pile and press down on them for 60 seconds. The crayons should stay together, but in layers. Your crayons have now entered the metamorphic rock phase!

7. Write Metamorphic Rock in the third and last column of your notebook page. Again, you will need to list everything you notice about the crayons, including the way they look, feel and smell. You may notice that crayons have bonded together in layers, but aren't really smooth or completely one rock. There may be some jagged edges, etc.

8. With the help of an adult, heat up a double broiler and place the metamorphic rock crayons inside. Stir until completely melted.

9. Pour the melted crayons into crayon molds. If you don't have one, any type of mold will do. You could even use an old ice cube tray!

10. Set the crayons aside to cool.

11. When the crayons are cool enough to touch, examine them. What do they look like? Are they smooth, hard, rough or soft? Write any notes in your notebook.

Results:

Your crayons have gone through a cycle similar to that of a rock. The crayons start off smooth and hard, convert to broken up pieces when grated and become stuck together in layers when pressed together. After they've been melted and cooled, they should feel hard and smooth again just like the igneous rock. That's because the crayons have now started the crayon rock cycle all over again.

Why:

Weather plays a big part in the rock cycle. Strong winds, rain, hail and other extreme weather conditions can break apart igneous rocks so that they are no longer one whole rock, but a pile of pieces. At that stage the rocks are called sedimentary rocks.

Over time, other rocks or debris may fall on top of the sedimentary rocks. The pressure from this debris smashes the sedimentary rocks together in layers. This is when the rocks enter the metamorphic rock phase. If the metamorphic rocks become heated, they blend back together and form one solid smooth rock—the igneous rock. Then the cycle starts all over again!

Try this experiment again with a bar of chocolate, a bar of soap or a candle. Afterward, take a nature walk and see if you can spot the three different types of rocks. To keep the rock theme going, you may even be able to convince your scientific assistant to let you have some rock candy!

Editor’s Note: Kids, if you get a new box of crayons for Christmas, here is a good way to use up your old broken ones and, at the same time, learn how rocks are made.

Source: http://www.education.com/science-fair/earth-space-science/crayon+rock/

Who What Where When Why How

December Birthdays

DEC 21 Esther Dunn

Random Rock Facts

Lithification is the changing of sediments into rock. There are two processes involved in this change:

Compaction occurs after the sediments have been deposited. The weight of the sediments squeezes the particles together. When more and more sediments are deposited on top, the weight on the sediments below increases. Waterborne sediments become so tightly squeezed together that most of the water is pushed out.

Cementation happens when dissolved minerals fill in the spaces between the sediment particles. These liquid minerals act as glue or cement to bind the sediments together.

Source: http://www.rocksandminerals4u.com/sedimentary_rocks.html
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Meeting Information

Time: 2:00 PM
Date: Fourth Sunday of each month (except June, July and August)
Place: Fellowship Hall – Tabernacle United Methodist Church
4205 S. Brannon Stand Road
Dothan, AL

Website: www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

Objectives

To stimulate interest in lapidary, earth science and, when necessary, other related fields.

To sponsor an educational program within the membership to increase the knowledge of its members in the properties, identifications and evaluations of rocks, minerals, fossils and other related subjects.

To cooperate and aid in the solution of its members' problems encountered in the Club's objectives.

To cooperate with other mineralogical and geological clubs and societies.

To arrange and conduct field trips to facilitate the collection of minerals.

To provide opportunity for exchange and exhibition of specimens and materials.

To conduct its affairs without profit and to refrain from using its assets for pecuniary benefit of any individual or group.

Classified Ads

Looking for an item to round out your rock collection?

Got a specimen, tool or handicraft for sale or trade?

Submit the pertinent details to me by the 10th of each month and your inclinations will be made known to the membership in the next bulletin.

N. J. Blackwell
28 Lakeview Trail, Apt. C
Daleville, AL 36322
Phone: 334-503-0308
Email: Tsavorite7@aol.com

Annual Dues

Single $15
Family $20

Officers

President – Pat LeDuc
334-806-5626

Vice President – Garry Shirah
334-671-4192

Secretary – Bruce Fizzell
334-577-4353

Treasurer – Diane Rodenhizer
334-447-3610

Bulletin Editor – Joan Blackwell
334-503-0308
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Webmaster – Pat LeDuc
334-806-5626

Membership Chair – Diane Rodenhizer
334-447-3610

Show Chair – Jeff DeRoche
334-673-3554

Field Trips Chair – Garry Shirah
334-671-4192

Hospitality Chair – Vacant

Club Hostess – Vacant

Club Liaison – Garry Shirah
334-671-4192

Refreshments

DEC 17 – Potluck Refreshments

ROCKHOUNDS HERALD
Editor – N. J. Blackwell
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Daleville, AL 36322

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Where you might hear…

Most minerals have a distinctive color that can be used for identification. In opaque minerals, the color tends to be more consistent, so learning the colors associated with these minerals can be very helpful in identification.

Translucent to transparent minerals have a much more varied degree of color due to the presence of trace minerals. Therefore, color alone is not reliable as a single identifying characteristic.

Because streak is a more accurate illustration of the mineral's color, streak is a more reliable property of minerals than color for identification.

http://www.rocksandminerals4u.com/properties_of_minerals.html
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