

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

# ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

920 Yorktown Road, Dothan, AL 36301-4372

[www.wiregrassrockhounds.com](http://www.wiregrassrockhounds.com)

**December 2017**

Streak: White

**Turquoise**

Mohs: 5.0 to 6.0

## Words from...

### The President

Our rhodochrosite program was good. Who would have thought that it was considered junk because of the silver that the miners were originally hunting. The video showed some beautiful specimens. I would be happy with any of them. Arnie says that the video gets much better as it goes along. He has a rhodochrosite sample from the same area where the video was filmed and will bring it for our next program. We will not be having a program in Dec as we will be having the Christmas party instead.

Well another year is wrapping up. It has been a good one. The club is doing fine but we are going to lose several of our officers this coming year. We will need some help replacing people so if you are interested in volunteering for a position such as VP, newsletter editor, field trip chair, club hostess, or hospitality chair let us know. We are going to need some new people to step in to help fill these spots.

I hope to see everyone at the Christmas party on the 16th.

Pat

## Announcement

The Dothan Gem & Mineral Club Christmas party will be held On Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at our regular meeting place. The club will provide the ham so please bring your favorite side or dessert. We will be having a gift exchange so if you wish to participate, please bring a gift to add to the pile. Meet at 12 eat at 1:00. Remember, we will **not** be having a meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday this month.

## Upcoming Shows

JAN 12 – 14	Pinellas Geological Society	Largo, FL
JAN 20 – 21	Panama City Gem & Mineral Society	Panama City, FL
JAN 20 – 21	Tomoka Gem and Mineral Society	Deland, FL

Source: <http://www.the-vug.com/educate-and-inform/mineral-shows/>

# Meeting Minutes – November 2017 – by Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER AND OPEN:** The meeting was called to order at 2:07PM by President Pat LeDuc. There were 13 members and 2 guests. Our guests were Josh and Andrew, who had learned of the club at church and came by to learn more about us and our activities. Today's program was a video about Rhodochrosite mines in Colorado.

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS:** Birthday wishes and happiness were wished for October and November babies. A reminder was given for the Montgomery Gem & Mineral club's annual show. Their show is December 1, 2, and 3 and they sent the club discount admission coupons for anyone planning to attend. We have new name tags! Yea!

**NOTE:** The Christmas Party will be here at the Church on December 16, starting at Noon. Meet and eat at 1. Bring a gift, get a gift - \$15 limit.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** AFMS Newsletter.

**MINUTES & TREASURE'S REPORT:** Minutes from last meeting approved and seconded. Diane Rodenhizer provided the treasury report; also acknowledged and approved. In a related matter, the club voted to donate \$100 to the Salvation Army for this holiday season.

Please Note –Third and Last Reminder - The fiscal year of the Club now starts September 1st. Existing members are being levied a pro-rated amount to cover their membership for the 8 months from January 1, 2018 to August 31, 2018. Singles will be asked to pay \$10 and families will be asked for \$13. That will allow members to have un-interrupted coverage in insurance coverage.

**SHOW BUSINESS:** All contracts have been mailed to vendors and should be coming back in soon. Jeff is still waiting to meet with Mickey about the 2018 rental fee, as well as fees for 2019 and beyond. Jeff is working out the details for new and improved signage. There are some new sign designs for special events that Jeff is looking into; Arch Signs? Dothan is getting tougher on event signs. Bruce will start bringing in Show Flyers so we can start getting these out. JoAn says that the materials are assembled for the kiddies grab bags, and Pat volunteered herself and me to help assemble them.

**NEW BUSINESS:** We will need a newsletter editor after the first of the year. Diane Tetzlaff is not able to take that on due to illness. The VP position will be open. Anne, Arnie and Jeff will be the selection committee. Arnie and Jeff took material boxes and educational pieces to the Headland School, 150+ kids, 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades. The educational pieces were from the Landmark Park Displays, and proved to be useful.

**FIELD TRIP REPORT:** Nothing to discuss for today.

**PROGRAM & SHOW AND TELL:** Arnie is back in the cab business again and he brought in some wonderful new pieces. JoAn showed a large quartz crystal piece that holds a small candle. Ben F. showed a large specimen that needs love and some skill to get at the crystals hiding inside. Elliot had photos and specimens from Martha's Vineyard that show the impact zone of when continents drifted into each other. The same type of rock/minerals can be found along what is now the eastern coast of North America and the west coast of Africa. Amazing!

Door Prizes for this month went to Catherine & Ben.

-- Respectfully submitted by B. Fizzell

## The Writing of Stones – Roger Caillois



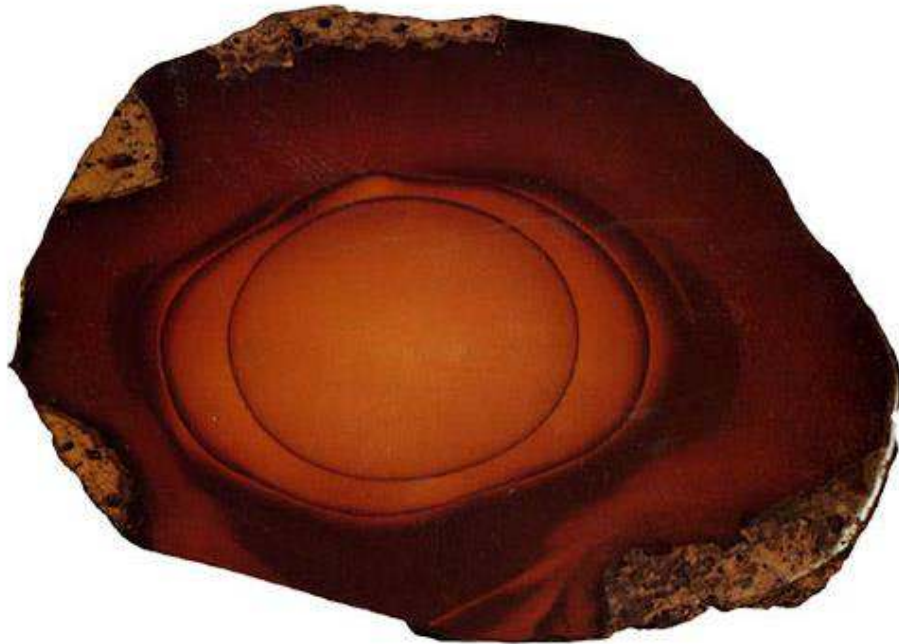
*Agate – Smithsonian Institution*

Surrealist and Sociologist Roger Caillois was known for his writings on [biomimicry](#), especially within the insect world, pareidolia and lithic scrying. His latter interest provided us with [The Writing of Stones](#), a book in which he unravels the ‘unfathomable graphic madness’ etched onto the rocks contained within the ‘archives of geology’. Each chapter of the book is dedicated to a species of rock – in each he channels ever increasingly dense, extravagant, and at times morbid tales from the authorless inscriptions each stone contains.

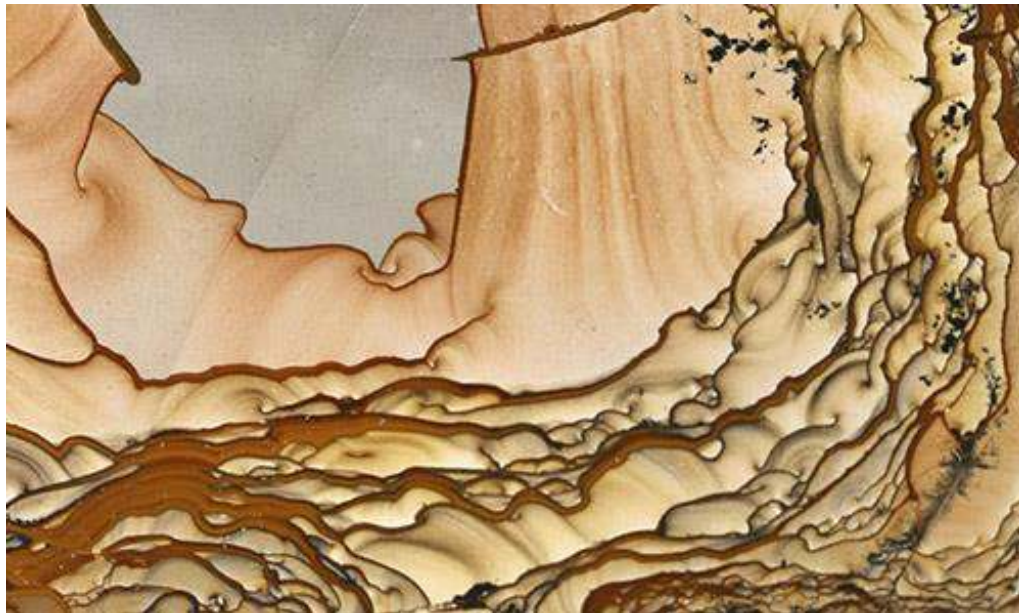
‘An Agate may shadow forth a tree, a forest, a whole landscape....clouds, lightning, a great sea full of fleeing galleys....Such objects may resemble a mountain or a cave – they reduce space and condense time’

‘The Jaspers of Oregon are unrivalled for the complexity of their carved designs [...] Universe of scrolls, branches, pleura [...] sand rhythmically modulated by wind’. On the Idaho Jaspers (one he names ‘Orbit’) he says ‘they proclaim the circuits of planets or electrons around their invisible centres or nuclei [...] The are like the rings of armillary sphere, with their zodiacs and ecliptics and equinoctial zones – bracelets for cosmographers or nuclear physicists’ Long before the invention chaos theory and fractal mathematics he realises that ‘they reflect the phantom revolutions which, alike on a vast and microscopic scale, unflaggingly repeat the same pattern’

Of the Septaria he remarks that ‘occasionally they open out into ravines lined with little crystals and that ‘they form patterns which explode; showers of many sided cells, sprays of dodecahedra, cobwebs spun in the void containing no lurking spider’. Intoxicated further by these glyphs he finds ‘floating phantoms, demons with eyes on stalks, a Sabbath of spirals or Bacilli’ and later on ‘elemental columns of chromosomes, protozoa and centipedes.



*'Orbits' Jasper – from the Writing of Stones*



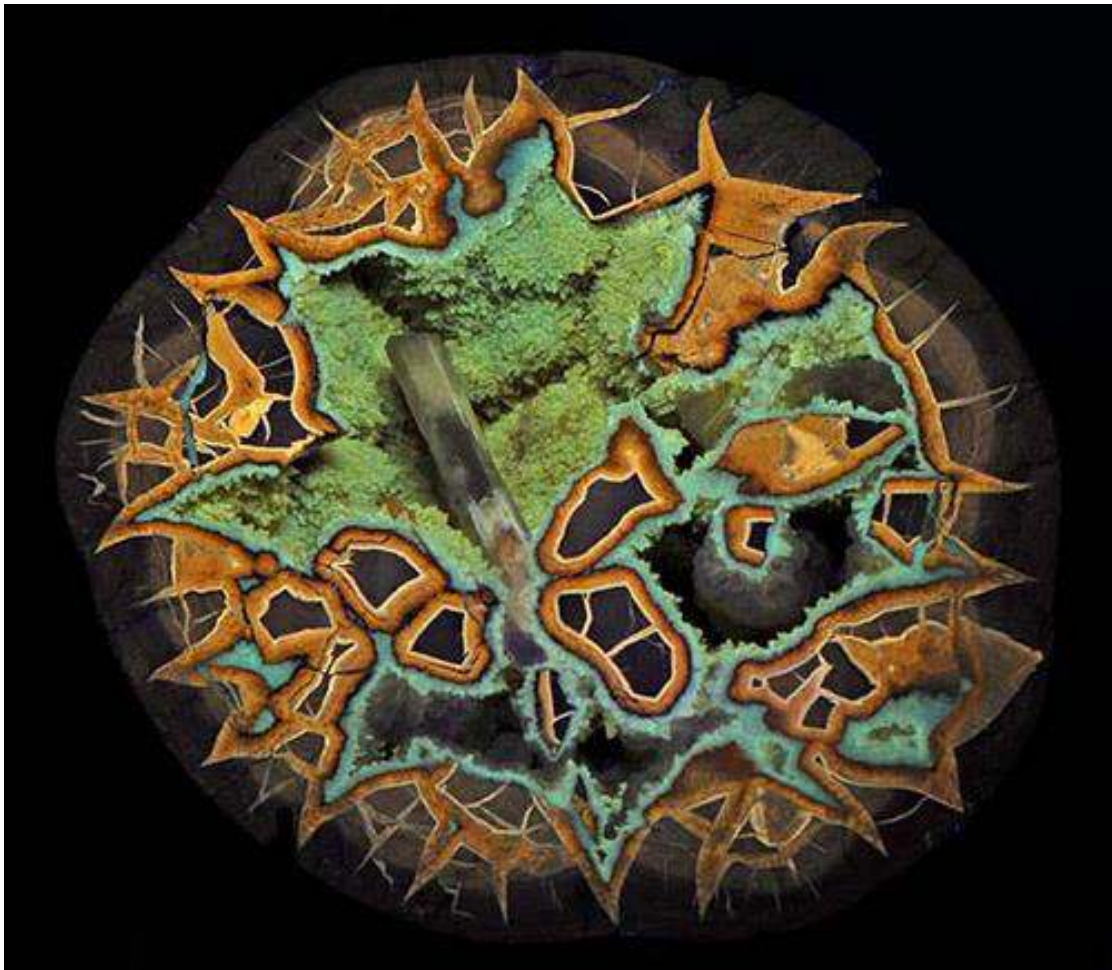
*Oregon Jasper*

As the book goes on, the inspection and introspection shift from empirical references to more outlandish ones, his isomorphisms eventually dissolve discretion and to gravitate towards the morbid. Uncensored geopoetic beautiful reveries are gradually displaced by grotesque fantasies –

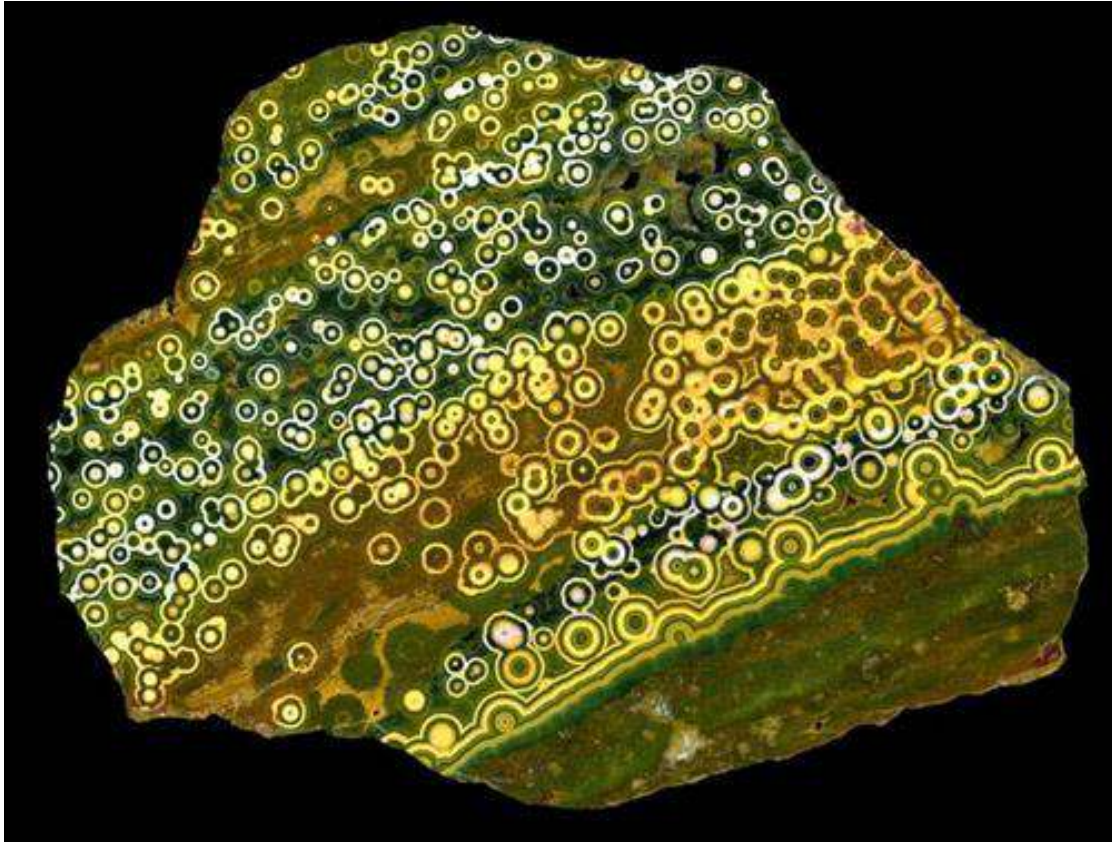


petrified mutilations and putrefactions. Caillios invites to us dwell on ‘muscles laid open in their cavities of bone...lopped off breasts...gnarled phalluses...frogs crucified by galvanic currents...eruptions of boils or buboes on an infected skin...intestinal worms glistening with the biles and juices digesting them...rotting shell-less molluscs...gobs of spit and knuckle bones softened by acid’. We enter a ‘a mauve and lunatic life, proliferating without law or limit, feverishly breeding goiters; a ravenous, shifting universe in which details are so clear it is almost endless’

In one section Caillois identifies Cubist structures reflected in one particular stone and shows that its our contact with the works of Braque and Picasso that forces us to see these patterns accordingly. So the lithic pareidoliac must rely on her database of memories to make sense of these patterns and forms.



*Septaria – R. Warin*



*Ocean Jasper – Marco Campos Venuti*

‘To be moved by the patterns one needs to know already the secret it unveils or recalls, one needs to have learned from scientific works of the thousands of patterns which this one brings together, and without which it would remain what it is really is – chance curves providentially assembled by another chance and randomly colored by metallic deposits’

Caillois’s own database was one defined in pre-digitised World. A re-reading of those very same stones today might bring to light new kinds stories riddled with algorithmic organisms or species born of New Aesthetic, where Boids trace trajectories defined by the chaotic parabolas of a Lorenz Attractor and Cellular Automata riot into ever shifting and unpredictable grid patterns.

**Source:** <http://www.dataisnature.com/?p=1990>

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The entry '[The Writing of Stones – Roger Caillois](#)' was posted on March 19th, 2014 at 10:23 pm and last modified on March 19th, 2014 at 10:58 pm, and is filed under Uncategorized. You can follow any responses to this entry through the [RSS 2.0](#) feed. You can [leave a response](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.



# Club Meeting – November 2017

Photos by Pat & Bruce





# Club Meeting – November 2017

Photos by Pat & Bruce







## Christmas Island – It's Not at the North Pole

Christmas Island covers 135 square kilometres and lies far out in the Indian Ocean, 2,600 kilometres northwest of Perth and 500 kilometres south of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. It rises steeply from the sea floor and a series of terraces surrounds an irregular plateau, with the lower terrace cliffs steeper and higher than the upper terraces. The highest point of the island is Murray Hill, which rises to 361 m above sea level.

Christmas Island is the peak of a basalt volcanic seamount which rose steeply 5,000 metres from the ocean floor about 60 million years ago. The island's emergence is a result of a series of geological uplifts over 10 or so million years. At each stage, layers of coral reefs built up over the basalt core, leaving today an almost continuous limestone cap. The stepped terraces and inland cliffs of the island's central plateau. The eighty-five square kilometres Christmas Island National Park makes up almost two thirds of the island.



The first European to sight the island was Richard Rowe of the *Thomas* in 1615. The island was later named on Christmas Day (25 December) 1643 by Captain William Mynors. The human settlement of Christmas Island had its origins in 1887, when a small party of British explorers made their way through dense jungle and collected rock specimens of almost pure phosphate of lime. The discovery of phosphate guided the island's destiny for the next century.

### Landscape features

The island has geologically significant subterranean cave systems, including anchialine cave systems (a subterranean water body with connections to the ocean), which provide habitat for endemic fauna, and its geological features are significant for illustrating geological and evolutionary processes. Anchialine cave systems occur at only one other known locality in Australia. The soils of Christmas Island are derived from two sources - limestone (terra rossa soils) or basaltic extrusive rocks (krasnozem soils). The island's 73 km coastline is an almost continuous sea cliff ranging in height up to 20 metres. At 13 places, breaks in the cliff give way to shallow bays and small sand and coral beaches. The largest of these bays forms the island's port at Flying Fish Cove.



# Twelve Days of Christmas

1

6

F	R	E	N	C	H	H	E	N	S	W	A	N	S	V
E	S	G	K	M	G	S	R	E	M	M	U	R	D	G
S	D	O	A	H	D	N	G	P	M	G	C	Q	M	J
E	R	L	B	N	I	D	I	Q	P	I	P	E	R	S
E	O	D	F	P	I	P	N	Y	I	M	X	C	B	G
G	L	E	L	R	I	K	D	W	A	D	N	H	U	N
N	D	N	T	N	M	A	I	D	S	L	N	R	E	I
G	P	R	G	M	I	L	K	I	N	G	D	I	H	M
Y	A	I	F	U	Z	T	W	O	M	L	O	S	M	M
P	E	N	T	Q	G	N	I	P	A	E	L	T	E	U
J	V	G	S	W	I	M	M	I	N	G	D	M	N	R
I	L	S	D	R	I	B	G	N	I	L	L	A	C	D
U	E	T	U	R	T	L	E	D	O	V	E	S	Y	P
U	W	B	N	O	O	S	Q	Y	T	X	P	C	F	S
N	T	V	O	M	U	Y	E	E	R	T	R	A	E	P

12

10

2

4

3



11

CALLING BIRDS  
CHRISTMAS  
DAYS  
DRUMMERS  
DRUMMING  
FRENCH HENS  
GEESE

GOLDEN RINGS  
LAYING  
LEAPING  
LORDS  
MAIDS  
MILKING  
PARTRIDGE

PEAR TREE  
PIPERS  
PIPING  
SWANS  
SWIMMING  
TURTLE DOVES  
TWELVE

8

9

7

5

# Who What Where When Why How

## December Birthdays

**DEC 2 Jeannia Reed**  
**DEC 20 Tamara Tanner**  
**DEC 21 Esther Dunn**

## Random Rock Facts

**Efflorescence** – the loss of water from the chemical structure of a mineral. A small number of hydrous minerals may partially lose the water in their structure if kept in dry or hot areas. This causes the mineral to form a white powder on its surface, and decreases its transparency. Some may eventually crumble from efflorescence.

**Deliquesce** – the absorption of water into the chemical structure of a mineral (the opposite of efflorescence). This property is only present in a few water-soluble minerals, e.g., Halite. Atmospheric water (humidity) gets absorbed into the structure of a mineral, thereby destroying its crystal lattice and causing it to dissolve.

Source: <http://www.minerals.net/resource/property/efflores.aspx>

## Meeting Information

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

## 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  
Tfavorite7@aol.com

**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

**Website:** [www.wiregrassrockhounds.com](http://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 10<sup>th</sup> 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: Tfavorite7@aol.com

## Annual Dues

Single \$15  
Family \$20

## Refreshments

**DEC 16th – Christmas Party**



# ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

Editor – N. J. Blackwell  
28 Lakeview Trail, Apt. C  
Daleville, AL 36322

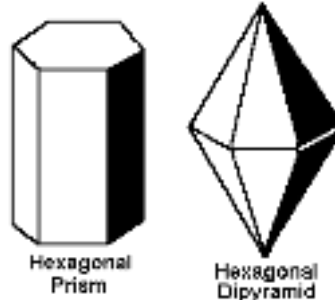
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## Where you might hear...

In the hexagonal system—one of six crystal systems and the only one with a fourth axis—three of these axes are equal in length and meet at  $60^\circ$  to each other. The C or vertical axis is at  $90^\circ$  to the three shorter axes. Hexagonal system minerals include apatite, beryl (including aquamarine, emerald, heliodor, and morganite), taaffeite, and zincite—each of which form in one of these two basic shapes:

### Hexagonal System



Hexagonal  
Prism

Hexagonal  
Dipyramid

Source: [https://www.gemsociety.org/article/mineral-habits/#The\\_Isometric\\_System](https://www.gemsociety.org/article/mineral-habits/#The_Isometric_System)  
*What are Crystal Systems and Mineral Habits?* by Donald Clark, CSM IMG  
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