

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

ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

920 Yorktown Road, Dothan, AL 36301-4372

www.wiregrassrockhounds.com

January 2012

HAPPY NEW YEAR

Words from...

The President

I trust everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We're starting 2012 with some new officers and I ask that everyone pitch in and help when needed. **The meeting this month is on Sunday, January 22.** We will be discussing our upcoming show, and we'll make plans for some workshops, field trips and summer socials. Speaking of shows, don't forget to mark your calendar; the Panama City Gem & Mineral Society Show is at the end of this month. Like last year, it is being held in the American Legion Hall on the Bay County Fairgrounds at the intersection of East 15th Street and Sherman Avenue in Panama City. Support our sister club if you can. See you on the 22nd. JoAn

Membership Dues

It's time to pay your annual membership dues: \$15 for singles and \$20 for a family. Membership Chair, Diane Rodenhizer, will be collecting payments at the January and February meetings, or you can mail her a check at: 478 Private Road 1106, Enterprise, AL 36330. **To ensure that you are not dropped from the Newsletter roster, please submit your payment before the end of February.**

Announcements

Arnie Lambert will be bringing a Genie Gem Maker to this month's meeting to be auctioned off. If you have an interest in purchasing it, be sure to bring some extra cash.

Upcoming Shows

January 28 – 29	Panama City Gem & Mineral Society	Panama City, FL
February 11 – 12	Central Brevard Rock & Gem Club, Inc.	Merritt Island, FL
February 25	Imperial Bone Valley Gem, Mineral and Fossil Society	Lakeland, FL

Source: www.amfed.org/sfms/

Social Recap – December 2011 – by Secretary

Many thanks to John and Ellen Webber for hosting the Christmas Social. The party was great and what a wonderful place to meet! Special thanks to Ms. Newton, Ellen's mom, for letting us take over her charming and spacious house; tucked away in the woods, surrounded on all sides by such beautiful scenery. Pictures from the party have been posted to the Gallery page of the website. Check it out.

Members and guests began arriving around noon and most of us had made it there by 1:00 PM. There were about 25 of us in total. As usual, when the club meets, there was enough food to feed everyone 5 times over. There was a nice variety of dishes and it was all so good. After we finished eating, the group gathered in the livingroom to begin the gift exchange. This year we went by birth month to determine the order for selecting a gift, so all the January folks got to pick first. As the packages were unwrapped, there were some great gifts revealed, e.g., gem and mineral identification guides, jewelry, and of course, all kinds of useful rock hound tools.

After the gift exchange, our outgoing president, Jeff DeRoche, presented a plaque to the Dunns in recognition of their many years of service and support to the club. Grady and Esther are founding members and have been active with the club since its inception in 1975.

Jeff expressed his thanks to everyone in the club for all the participation during the previous year and then turned the gavel over to JoAn Lambert who assumes the job as club president for 2012. While we didn't have a formal meeting, we did take a few moments to discuss some club business and talk briefly about some plans for the upcoming year, e.g., potential trips for collecting, the gem and mineral show, topics for the newsletter, etc.

The full list of officers for 2012 was also recognized:

President – JoAn Lambert

Vice President – Jeff DeRoche

Secretary/Webmaster – Pat LeDuc

Treasurer – Diane Rodenhizer

Bulletin Editor – Joan Blackwell

Membership Chair – Diane Rodenhizer

Show Chair – Arnie Lambert

Field Trips Chair – Ken Wilson

Hospitality Chair – Meredith Capshaw

Club Hostess – Laural Meints

As you might guess, after the formalities ended the conversations turned to who was getting new rock hounding equipment for Christmas. The party began to wind down around 4:00 PM as we wished each other happy holidays and planned to start anew in January.

Respectfully submitted by Pat LeDuc

Learning Series: Alabama's Rocks and Minerals – The “Super Sites”

Background

Physiographically, the state is divided into five sections: the Highland Rim, Cumberland Plateau, Valley and Ridge, Piedmont Upland, and East Gulf Coastal Plain. Each of these is characterized by rocks of specific geologic age and composition, and the resultant landforms reflect these rock types.

Highland Rim

- has moderate relief and primarily consists of Paleozoic limestone and chert
- sometimes called the Interior Low Plateau
- flat land, good for growing soybeans, cotton, and corn

Cumberland Plateau

- characterized by Paleozoic sandstone, shale, and limestone underlying the valleys, whereas more resistant sandstone supports the ridges
- also called the Appalachian Plateau
- varied land forms including tree-covered mountains, flat land, and rolling hills
- rises to 1,800 feet above sea level in the northeast; slopes southwest down to about 500 feet above sea level

Alabama Valley and Ridge

- characterized by diverse Paleozoic sedimentary rocks and consists of a series of folded and faulted ridges and valleys that run generally northeast-southwest
- rich in iron ore, coal, and limestone
- part of the Appalachian Mountains

Piedmont Upland

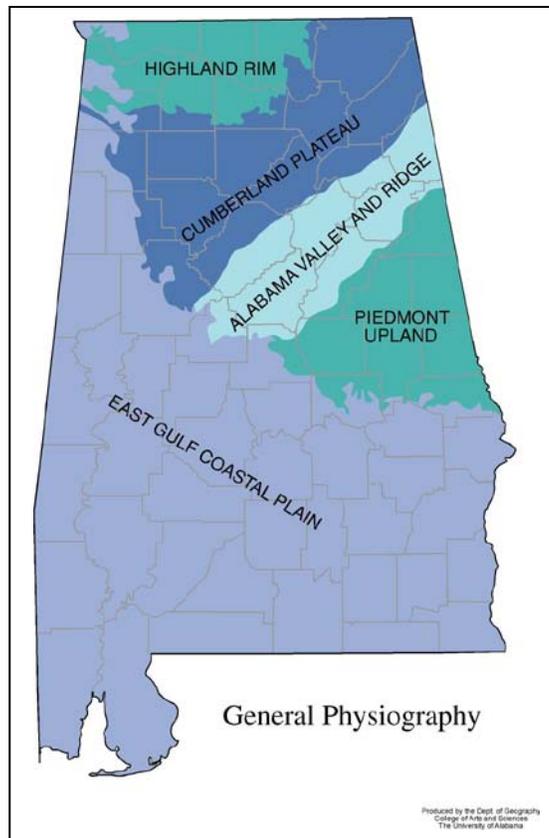
- composed of faulted crystalline metamorphic and igneous rocks that represent the oldest rocks in the state, dating back to the Precambrian
- tree-covered, low rolling hills and sandy valleys
- hills contain iron ore, limestone, and marble
- Cheaha Mountain, Alabama's highest point, is found in this area

East Gulf Coastal Plain

- an area of Mesozoic and Cenozoic sediments that occupies the southern two-thirds of the state and curves northward almost to the Tennessee border on the western side where generally unconsolidated sediments overlap rocks of the of the other sections
- hilly terrain, but most of its land is less than 500 feet above sea level
- consists of pine forests, swampy areas, wiregrass and areas of rich, loamy soil
- contains oil and gas resources

Most of the state is covered with sedimentary rocks, with exposures of igneous and metamorphic rocks being confined to the east-central part of the state in the Piedmont Upland. The sediment left behind from ancient oceans, swamps, and other near-shore environments composes most of the state's bedrock: limestone, sandstone, shale, and chalk.

Several varieties of metallic and nonmetallic minerals have been successfully mined from Alabama's igneous and metamorphic rocks, including gold, lead, zinc, mica, talc, asbestos, and kaolin. Marble (the official state rock) and granite have also been quarried successfully from the Piedmont Upland.



Rock and Mineral Collecting Sites

In addition to being useful, many of the minerals discussed above are of interest to collectors. Alabama is home to a variety of gemstones and other specimen-quality minerals that are sought after just for their appearance and characteristics. The diverse geologic makeup of the state is reflected in the large number of different mineral species found in Alabama with more than 190 mineral species occurring in the state.

According to the “Rocks and Minerals of Alabama – A Guidebook for Alabama Rockhounds” (Circular 38, 1966), specimen-quality minerals are spread throughout 37 of Alabama’s 67 counties, with the preponderance of them being exposed in Chambers, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Randolph, Tallapoosa, and parts of Chilton, Elmore, and Lee counties—notably, the counties that comprise the Piedmont Upland region of the state.

Alabama’s “Super Sites” for Rock and Mineral Collecting

Of those 37 Alabama counties, 12 have communities that seem especially blessed with desirable specimens. Referred to in this Learning Series as “Super Sites”, these gem- and mineral-rich counties and communities offer from two to six specimens within the same general collecting vicinity. Considered on a county level, three have as many as 14 different rocks and minerals in the same geographic area (Clay – 10; Coosa – 14; and, Tallapoosa – 10). For the next year, we will explore the rocks and minerals found in these 12 Super Sites, county by county.

County	Community	Rocks and Minerals
Bibb	"Sinks Area"	barite, fluorite
Calhoun	Angel Station	galena, sphalerite
Clay	Ashland	biotite, garnet, muscovite, schist
	Coleta	azurite, malachite
	Pyriton	marcasite, pyrite
	Rebecca-Tallega	conglomerate, quartzite
Cleburne	Micaville	feldspar, muscovite, pegmatite, tourmaline
Coosa	Mitchell Dam	actinolite-tremolite, gneiss, hornblende
	Pentonville	beryl, kaolinite, pegmatite
	Rockford	cassiterite, feldspar, muscovite, phyllite, tantalite, tourmaline
	Thomas Crossroads	diorite, granite
Franklin	Russellville	limonite-goethite, siderite
Lee	Auburn	gneiss, dolomite, marble, quartzite
Limestone	Elkmont	calcite, fluorite, gypsum, limestone, pyrite
Randolph	Cragford	galena, sphalerite
Tallega	Sylacauga	calcite, marble, pyrite
Tallapoosa	Alexander City	quartz, tantalite
	Dadeville	anthophyllite, corundum, hornblende, talc
	Dudleyville	anthophyllite, chlorite, diorite, hornblende
	Easton	actinolite-tremolite, anthophyllite, hornblende, magnetite, talc
	Windcreek	chlorite, garnet, schist
Tuscaloosa	Brookwood	bituminous coal, chalcedony
	Rickey	limonite-goethite, siderite

Sources:

www.shgresources.com/gems/found/
www.dirtyrockhounds.com/stategemstones.html
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www.gsa.state.al.us/documents/misc_gsa/IS64RMinerals.pdf
www.encyclopediaofalabama.org/face/Article.jsp?id=h-1549

Who What Where When Why How

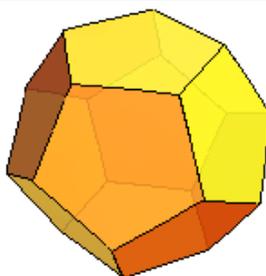
January Birthdays

JAN 1 – Aida Ward

JAN 5 – Shad Gibbons

JAN 20 – Joan Blackwell

Random Rock Facts



The dodecahedron form is composed of 12 rhomb-shaped faces. Each rhomb-shaped face intersects two of the other axes at equidistance and is parallel to the 3rd axis. A very well-known crystal which exhibits this form is garnet, the birthstone for January.

Meeting Information

Time: 2:00 PM

Date: Fourth Sunday of each month (except June, July and August)

Place: Fellowship Hall – Tabernacle United Methodist Church
4329 S. Brannon Stand Road
(intersection of Brannon Stand Road and Hwy 52)
Dothan, AL

Officers

President – JoAn Lambert
334-792-7116

Vice President – Jeff DeRoche
334-673-3554

Secretary/Webmaster – Pat LeDuc
334-806-5626

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Membership Chair – Diane Rodenhizer
334-447-3610

Show Chair – Arnie Lambert
334-792-7116

Field Trips Chair – Ken Wilson
850-547-9577

Hospitality Chair – Meredith Capshaw
334-684-9448

Club Hostess – Laural Meints
334-723-2695

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: Tfavorite7@aol.com

Annual Dues

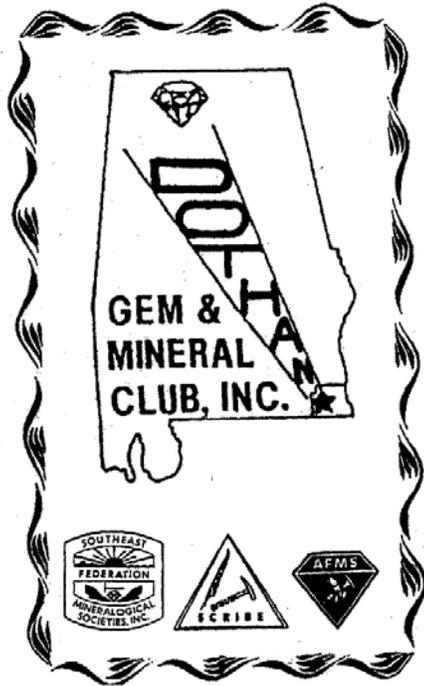
Single \$15
Family \$20

Refreshments

JAN – Jeff DeRoche

FEB – To be determined

MAR – To be determined



Where you might hear...

Two types of mineral aggregates are:

Pisolitic – consisting of rounded grains like peas or beans, e.g., bauxite.

Botryoidal – resembling a bunch of grapes; describes hematite and a number of the other minerals such as malachite in which very small radiating crystals are arranged in massive clumps, giving a surface covered with spherical bulges (from Greek *botrys*, “bunch of grapes”).

Source: National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Rocks and Minerals, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1994

Member of
Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies

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