

# ROCKHOUNDS HERALD

920 Yorktown Road, Dothan, AL 36301-4372

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

**October 2016**

**Opal**  $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$    **Opal**  $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$    **Opal**  $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$    **Opal**  $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$    **Opal**  $\text{SiO}_2 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$   
**Pink Tourmaline** *Elbaite:  $\text{Na}(\text{Li},\text{Al})_3\text{Al}_6(\text{BO}_3)_3\text{Si}_6\text{O}_{18}(\text{OH})_4$*

## Words from...

### The President

It was nice to see such a good turnout for the club's first meeting after the summer break. We had a good crowd, good food and a good Show & Tell. Over the break, one of our members, Joan Blackwell, hiked portions of the Appalachian Trail in all 14 states the trail crosses. She has posted photos from each site where she hiked or where she went sightseeing off the trail, and is in the process of posting recaps in an online journal about each day of the trip. Ask her about them when you see her.

Quite a few members mentioned they are exploring potential dig sites for the club. I have tried to keep up with the pay-to-dig sites around our area. Jackson's Crossroads is closing for the season on October 10<sup>th</sup>. They are going to be doing some maintenance and will reopen for digs in April. The Hogg Mine has several open digs scheduled for this fall. They will be held on Oct 15<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>, Nov 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> and Dec 10<sup>th</sup>. You can go to their website for more information.

On Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>, the North Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society is hosting their 7<sup>th</sup> annual rock swap at Ballard Park in Tupelo. I know it conflicts with the get together at Arnie & JoAn's but if you are in the area, it sounds well worth the visit. We can all bring the treasures that we collect at Arnie & JoAn's to Show & Tell at our meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Hope to see everyone there.

Pat

## Announcement

Editor's Note – Thanks to Pat LeDuc and Bruce Fizzell for putting the finishing touches on last month's newsletter while I was off hiking parts of the Appalachian Trail. NJB

## Upcoming Shows

OCT 22 – 23	St. Lucie County Rock and Gem Club	Stuart, FL
NOV 11 – 13	Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society	Pascagoula, MS
NOV 18 – 20	Columbia SC Gem & Mineral Society	Columbia, SC
NOV 19 – 20	Gem & Mineral Society of the Palm Beaches, Inc.	West Palm Beach, FL
NOV 25 – 27	Roanoke Valley Mineral & Gem Society	Salem, VA

# Meeting Minutes – September 2016 – by Secretary

The meeting was called to order on 9/25/16 at 14:03 by our president, Pat LeDuc. There were 27 club members and no guests in attendance. Birthdays were wished.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS / COLD OPEN: Pat spoke about what she did on her summer vacation in a segment called "What I did on my summer vacation". Pat had a great time with family and friends on her High School Reunion and sister's birthday trip, but she did not bring back any rocks, gems or minerals. She did visit the Pez Candy factory so that might count as minerals. Pez have a hardness index of 3 to 3.5, slightly below opals and that is good enough to qualify as a generic rock or at least a rock-like substance, in the opinion of this author.

CORRESPONDENCE: AFMS Newsletter and a flyer about the upcoming Bead Fest in Lynn Haven, FL on 10/1/2016.

MINUTES & TREASURER'S REPORT: Minutes from the May meeting were approved/seconded probably because no one could remember back that far with any clarity. Diane Rodenhizer brought forth the Treasurer's Report and what can be said other than our club is healthy and thriving. The club auction netted \$123 back in August. Not a bad haul.

OLD BUSINESS: No old items of business were up for discussion. This is troubling. Let's use this chance to wish a big old happy birthday to William Faulkner, born this day near Oxford, Mississippi in 1897. Now I have padded out this section and I know I feel a lot better. To trick my editor – quartz, agates, iron, bismuth and soap stone all taste a whole lot more like cherries than limestone does when you stew them.

SHOW BUSINESS: Jeff DeRoche handed out registration paperwork to the members who plan to book tables for the 2017 show on March 18, 19 and 20. Jeff has contacted and confirmed with Mickey, the manager of the site, that all systems are "Go". We are reminded to start bringing in Grab Bag and Silent Auction Items. Pat volunteered Bruce for something, so I guess he will find out about that sooner or later, he is used to this by now.

NEW BUSINESS: Jeff saw and spoke to Aida Ward at Foster Fest in Dothan, and she seems to be doing well, and hopes to make it to a meeting soon. Arnie Lambert is having a Free Rock Day on Saturday, October 22 starting at 9 AM. He will also have some items, equipment and tools for sale. The Panama City club members have been invited, so this should be quite the deal. Maybe a food fight. Pat mentioned that she would be looking into DVD's regarding club topics from our local ruling chapters so that we have some interesting content for our programs. Arnie spoke about the difficulties he and Garry Shirah have been having finding field trip sites. Some sites – private, not commercial – are asking for money. This is on sites we have even had digs in the past.

PROGRAM & SHOW AND TELL: Today we have a special report from Joan Blackwell about her recent Appalachian Trail trip. Her trip was of the Hike-Segments-of-the-Trail-in-All-14-States type. Adventure, rock collecting, bears and one snake. See her journal at: <http://www.trailjournals.com/entry.cfm?trailname=20925> - Or go to [www.trailjournals.com](http://www.trailjournals.com) and enter the trail name: Ring Splint. Great photos and wonderful journal. Other specimens for show and tell were brought in and presented by Arnie, Joe Coody and Ken Wilson. The final bit of business before we chowed down was the feeding frenzy that occurred over the items that Ellen Webber brought in from her own collection that needed new homes after Ellen retired from teaching this last Spring. Nice stuff and very thoughtful of her to share!

The meeting wrapped up with food and the presentation of a Door Prize. The Door Prize went to David Jones, who, in keeping with club tradition, chose wisely.

Respectfully submitted by B. Fizzell

## Learning Series: A Potpourri of Rock Collecting Information



**How to tell the difference between Jasper and an Agate?** The simple answer is if you put light behind the material and you can see through it, then it is an Agate if you can't then your holding Jasper. The more complex answer is that it is not always that straightforward. The simple science behind this question is that both Agates and Jaspers are comprised of Quartz- which is one of the most common minerals on the planet. Quartz is comprised of two major types- macrocrystalline (large crystal) and cryptocrystalline (small crystal).

Now here is where it can get confusing, one major variety of cryptocrystalline quartz is Chalcedony. Chalcedony includes Carnelian, Chrysoprase, Agate, Bloodstone, Jasper and others. When Chalcedony is concentrically banded it is called an Agate. Occasionally the banding is larger than the crystal and the banding is not visible- like with most Carnelian.

Another sub-variety of Chalcedony is opaque quartz called Jasper. Jasper can be banded or striated, depending on how it formed, and are most commonly red, yellow, green, brown or a mixture of these colors.

Examples of Macrocrystalline Quartz are clear quartz, Smokey Quartz, Amethyst, Citrine which form in a singular point or clusters. But these are neither an Agates nor a Jasper, so were moving on from these.

The main reason it is difficult to differentiate an Agate from Jasper is that they originate from the same minerals. Another major reason is due to the mislabeling of materials being cut in foreign countries as either an Agate or Jasper without considering the science in the naming process. We recognize this problem quite often, but for reasons of consistency in the marketplace we use the incorrect label.



I hope this sheds a little light on the differences between Jasper and Agate and provides you with a quick test to tell the difference for yourself, even if it is labeled otherwise.

*SIDE NOTE: Examples of Macrocrystalline Quartz are clear quartz, Smokey Quartz, Amethyst, Citrine which form in a singular point or clusters. These types of quartz tend to be translucent and neither Jaspers nor Agates fall under this category of Quartz.*

## Buying a Strand of Gemstones

### “What to look for and look out for”

We all have our own reasons why we choose stone in our designs- but I feel we all share one commonality. We like working in a natural product- something that formed naturally over time and each bead is unique to itself- a little piece of art. The issue with natural materials is that there is very little control over how it looks, availability or inherent flaws. Here are a few tips when buying a strand of gemstones to help minimize unusable beads...



**Top to bottom.** Often when we pick up a hank of beads, we hold it in the center letting 50% of the strand drape. The top and bottom few inches is typically where the bad beads are strung. Lay a strand down and look over the entire length. A few bad beads are acceptable. Hopefully the good far outnumber the bad.

**Wear n tear.** Check between the beads for wear and chipping at the holes. Beads will rub together over time and can damage the hole. A little dust from the beads is acceptable and will wipe off.

**It's all in the drill.** How a bead is drilled is very important to how it will work in a design. This is never more obvious than a poorly drilled rondelle. This is one of the most difficult shapes to drill.

To check a drill pull the strand tight from both ends and see how the beads lay. Occasionally the drills are good, but the strand is strung to tightly which causes the beads to look catawampus (yes, it is a scientific term, take my word for it).

These are few techniques you can use when evaluating a strand of stone. Keep in mind that natural flaws, inclusions and that strange black spot that looks like the state of Florida is what makes stone natural and interesting to work with.



# Club Meeting – September 2016

Photos by Pat & Bruce



**Shiny Stuff!**



# Club Meeting – September 2016

Photos by Pat & Bruce



**Big crowd for our first post-summer meeting. Folks brought in projects they'd been working on, specimens they'd collected and items they'd purchased retail while traveling to exotic locales.**





# Careers in Geology

I'm sure many of you out there want to be a geologist when you grow up. But, how much do you really know about geologists? For a geologist, the whole Earth is a laboratory full of opportunities to observe the Earth processes in action. In February 1992, money magazine ranked "geologist" second overall out of 100 best occupations and was in the top nine for "jobs that satisfy." Many geologists work for the federal or state government, many are also self-employed. Geology can be a very rewarding career. In fact in 1991 about 85,000 geologists were working in the United States alone, according to the AGI geoscientific employment and hiring survey. Geologists often specialize in one of many areas. Here is a list of some of the areas, and a description of what they do.

**Geologists** by themselves study the physical nature, materials, products, processes and history of the Earth.

**Mineralogists** study mineral composition, formation, and properties.

**Soil scientists** study soils and their properties to determine how to sustain agricultural productivity and detect and remediate contaminated soils.

**Sedimentologists** study sedimentary rocks and the processes of sediment formation, distribution, nature, and alteration of sediments. Oil, gas, coal, and many mineral deposits occur in such sediments.

**Volcanologists** investigate volcanoes and volcanic phenomena to predict eruptions and understand these natural hazards.

**Seismologists** study the location and force of earthquakes and analyze the behavior of earthquake waves to interpret the structure of the Earth.

**Hydrogeologists** study the occurrence, abundance, distribution and quality of ground waters and related geologic aspects of surface waters. A hydrologist is concerned with water from the moment of precipitation until it evaporates, or joins the ocean.

**Glacial geologists** study the movement and physical properties of glaciers and ice sheets.

**Marine geologists** investigate the ocean-floor and continent boundaries, they also study ocean basins and continental shelves.

**Stratigraphers** investigate the time and space relationships of rocks, especially the mineral and fossil content of layered rocks.

**Structural geologists** analyze Earth's forces by studying fracturing, folding, and deformation that has occurred in the Earth's crust.

**Engineering geologists** apply geological data, techniques, and principles to study rock, soil surficial materials, and ground water. They also investigate geologic factors that affect structures like bridges, buildings, and dams.

**Environmental geologists** work to solve problems with pollution, waste disposal, urban development, and hazards such as flooding and erosion. They also study the interaction between the different spheres and human activities.

**Economic geologists** explore for and develop metallic and nonmetallic resources, as well as geologic materials that have profitable uses.

**Petroleum geologists** are involved in exploration for and production of oil and gas resources.

**Planetary geologists** study the moon and other planets to understand the evolution of the solar system.

**Paleontologists** study fossils to understand past life forms and their changes through time and to reconstruct past environments.

**Paleoecologists** study the function and distribution of ancient organisms and their relationships to their environment.

**Petrologists** determine the origin and natural history of rocks by analyzing mineral composition and grain relationships.

**Geochronologists** use the rates of decay of certain radioactive elements in rocks to determine their age and thus help reconstruct the geologic history of the Earth.

**Geochemists** use physical and inorganic chemistry to investigate the nature and distribution of major and minor elements in ground water and Earth materials.

**Geophysicists** decipher the Earth's magnetic, electric and gravitational fields. They also apply the principles of physics to studies of the Earth's interior.

**Geomorphologists** study the effects of Earth's processes and investigate the nature, origin, and development of present landforms and their relationship to underlying structures.

**Geodynamacists** study plate tectonics, specifically the hows and whys of plate motions and deformations.

While this might be a little over whelming, all you really need to consider is "what's your favorite thing about geology." I, for one, like learning about minerals and such, so I might look into finding out more about mineralogy. I'm sure that rock hounds will be able to choose what you like best too, though it'll probably be hard because everything about geology is so cool!

Source: <http://www.rockhoundkids.com/RK-3-07.pdf>  
*Rock Hound Kids Newsletter March 2007*

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# Who What Where When Why How

## October Birthdays

**OCT 2 Pat LeDuc**  
**OCT 8 Maxine Johnson**  
**OCT 17 Gary Meints**  
**OCT 19 Anne Trice**

## Random Rock Facts

Minerals tend to break along lines or smooth surfaces when hit sharply. Different minerals break in different ways showing different types of cleavage. The names of cleavage angles correspond to the shape formed by the cleaved surfaces.

**Cubic** – cleaves in three directions at 90° to one another

**Rhombohedral** – cleaves in three directions; not at 90° to each other

**Octahedral** – cleaves in four directions

**Dodecahedral** – cleaves in six directions

**Basal** – cleaves in one direction

**Prismatic** – cleaves in two directions

Source: [http://www.rocksandminerals4u.com/properties\\_of\\_minerals.html](http://www.rocksandminerals4u.com/properties_of_minerals.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

## 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

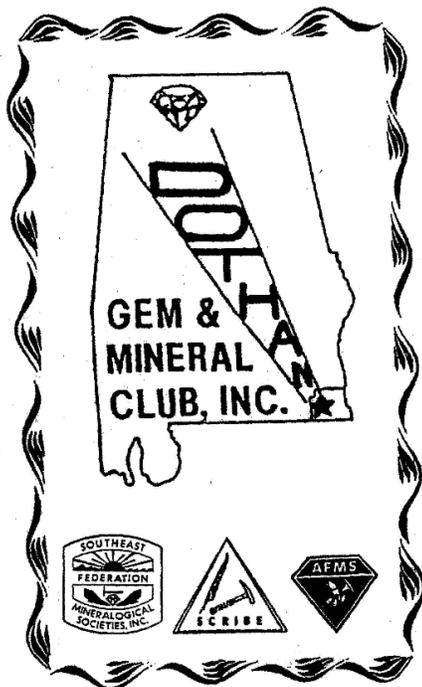
## Refreshments

**OCT 23 – Potluck Refreshments**

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Editor – N. J. Blackwell  
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Daleville, AL 36322

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## Where you might hear...

The Earth is made of rock, from the tallest mountains to the floor of the deepest ocean. Thousands of different types of rocks and minerals have been found on Earth. Most rocks at the Earth's surface are formed from only eight elements (oxygen, silicon, aluminum, iron, magnesium, calcium, potassium, and sodium), but these elements are combined in a number of ways to make rocks that are very different.

Rocks are continually changing. Wind and water wear them down and carry bits of rock away; the tiny particles accumulate in a lake or ocean and harden into rock again. The oldest rock that has ever been found is more than 3.9 billion years old. The Earth itself is at least 4.5 billion years old, but rocks from the beginning of Earth's history have changed so much from their original form that they have become new kinds of rock. By studying how rocks form and change, scientists have built a solid understanding of the Earth we live on and its long history.

Source: <http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/collect1/collectgip.html>

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**Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.**  
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