



A monthly publication of the Clear Lake Gem & Mineral Society

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JUNE 2017

NUMBER 6



**NEXT MEETING:** June 19, 2017  
**TIME:** 7:30 p.m.  
**LOCATION:** Clear Lake Park Building  
 5001 Nasa Parkway  
 Seabrook, Texas

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June Meeting	1	<p><b><u>JUNE MONTHLY MEETING</u></b></p> <p><b>Rocks And Gems of The Alamo</b></p> <p>The program will be presented by Steve Hokanson, Alamo expert. The program will discuss important rocks and gems of the Alamo including recent discoveries, and paths of new research. Visitors are always welcomed.</p> 
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**MINUTES OF THE MAY 15, 2017 MONTHLY MEETING**

Meeting called to order at 7:35pm. We started with our guest speaker Sarah Costello, Professor of Art History at U of H Clear Lake. She gave a presentation on Cylinder Seals in the Ancient World. Once again, Vince brought us another wonderful speaker! Thank you!

Business at hand: Scholarship recipients were announced. Frank Okonkwo, Ramya Ravindranathan, and Brooke Bogan will each receive a \$1,000.00 check at our next meeting. Congratulations students!

The budget is almost worked out. We should have an update at our next meeting.

Two new members were introduced. Welcome!

The field trip outside of Lampassas was a success. Trina brought some really nice specimens to show us. Becky will be going on the HGMS field trip to Midlothian.

We have some exciting news; Vince has agreed to be our 2018 Show Chairman. Sara will be guiding Vince through this process. Thank you to both of them!

We hope to know by next meeting if we have a venue for a small rock show. If you are interested please make sure to come.

Next month will have Steve Hokanson with a presentation on Rocks and Gems of the Alamo.

Charlie Timme has agreed to teach a class on dichroic glass making. It will be in September or October and will be limited to 9 people. Then he will have a follow-up class on wire wrapping your dichroic pendant. Details to come. Something to look forward to!

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted by Pam Dudley, Secretary

## MINUTES OF THE JUNE 5, 2017, BOARD MEETING



Meeting started at 7:30pm. David filled in for Raul. Scholarships have been taken care of and will be awarded at the next general meeting.

Vince gave an update on upcoming programs. We discussed back-up plans should a speaker not be able to make it.

Double payment was accidentally made to one of the radio stations. It was decided to get a return as opposed to applying it toward next year. This will help balance our budget.

John Caldine will check the venue across the street from where we meet about having a mini-show. He will give us details at the next meeting.

Show meetings will start at the next board meeting. All those involved should attend. Vince, our new show chairman, will get a "countdown" list from Sara.

We ended with a discussion on future field trips. Vince has started a list and we would appreciate your suggestions.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted by Pam Dudley, Secretary

### **Mining Sapphires from Home**

by Linda Burns (from Denver Gem & Mineral Guild's *Tips & Chips*, July 2016, [excerpted and edited], from Pick & Shovel, March 2017)



If you want the fun of finding sapphires but lack the funding or time required for an extended trip to Montana, consider ordering bags of gravel concentrate from one of the sources listed in this article.

When you order your gravel, it can come in several different size bags and the cost of shipping is dependent on the amount and weight of the bags ordered. Once you have the bags at home it's time to gather all your supplies and

start MINING FOR SAPPHIRES.

To mine for sapphires at home, you will need several items before starting: 1) a set of at least two or three screens (instructions for how to build your own at end of article); 2) a large flat container for water (big enough to put the screens in); 3) a piece of material large enough to cover the screen (2" foam pad works well); 4) tweezers; 5) a small bottle for storing your finds; and 6) plenty of patience and persistence.

To start mining for sapphires, fill your container about two-thirds full of water. Place your screens in the water. The screen with the largest holes should be on top and the one with the smallest holes on the bottom. Open your bag of sapphire concentrate gravel and pour some or all of it on the top screen. (If you have more than a small bag of gravel you will need to do several smaller batches). Once you have a screen full of material, wash it down. Make sure all of the pieces of mud are washed and broken down completely (those darn sapphires can hide from you in the mud!). After washing the rocks left on the top screen, remove it and check it for sapphires. You never know when a large one will show up! I always put aside all of the material screened and washed; I dry and re-check it at least once more (you will be surprised at how many more you find later). If using three screens (which I do), you continue this process with each screen. The last and smallest screen should be "swished" back and forth in your water several times while lifting and lowering it to help concentrate the heavier rocks in the middle.

Now is the time to use your foam to cover the screen. Once you have the screen covered, make sure you have a clean surface larger than the screen where you can get it wet without causing problems. This can be very messy so insure you are in an area which can stand to be wet and dirty. Now flip it. With the foam covering the screen, hold it down so the rocks stay in place and turn it upside down to rest on your flat surface. The rocks are now resting on the foam and the screen can be removed. It is time to see how well you have done in concentrating the sapphires in the bottom middle of your rocks. Look for any "shiny, clear, glassy" rocks. You have just found SAPPHIRES!!!!

Use your tweezers to remove these stones and place them in a small container. I have and use empty film containers (that I saved from an earlier life). Any small bottle will work, like empty prescription bottles. I like to allow my material to dry out at this point and then go back though to find the ones I missed the first time.



You are not done yet. You still have all of the material that went through your smallest screen in the bottom of your washing container. This material can still contain a lot of small sapphires. Empty the water slowly out of one corner into an area which can take the sediment. Adding water and draining it off several times will allow you to remove most of the very small

sediments. Be sure not to drain it off too fast so as not to wash out your small sapphires. Once you have drained off most of the water you can “swish” the material down a level and look for more sapphires. I like to allow this material to dry and then go back through it several times to make sure I get all of the “good” out of it. **SUCCESS!! YOU HAVE NOW MINED AT HOME FOR SAPPHIRES!!**

Do an online search for other sources for gravel concentrate. Here are a couple that I found:

The Sapphire Gallery  
Phillipsburg, Montana  
406-859-3236  
[www.sapphiregallery.com](http://www.sapphiregallery.com)

The Sapphire Studio  
Hamilton, Montana  
406-381-1392  
[www.sapphiremining.com](http://www.sapphiremining.com)

## **BENCH TIPS BY BRAD SMITH**

### DRILL PRESS VISE



A drill press vise is a versatile tool to hold a workpiece securely and in precise alignment. It reduces the of risks of working with high power motors, use of larger drill bits, and higher heat generated in the operation. The vise can be clamped to the drill press table if needed and is quite handy for use at the bench to hold things for sawing or riveting.

You can find them at stores that carry machine tool supplies. My feeling is that the best ones are made from steel. In particular, I like the ones with V grooves cut into the jaw plates. That lets me hold a punch straight upright or hold a rod horizontal. To find a supplier, search on "drill press vise" at sites like [micromark.com](http://micromark.com) [mscdirect.com/enco](http://mscdirect.com/enco) [smallparts.com](http://smallparts.com) [grizzly.com](http://grizzly.com) [sears.com](http://sears.com)

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## DENTAL GOLD

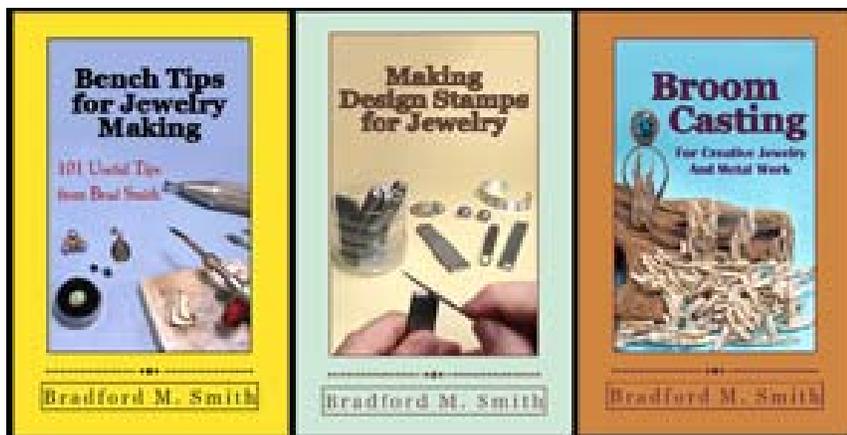
You might think that a couple pieces of dental gold would be valuable, but if you only have a small amount, it can be a problem. Sending it to a refiner is expensive for small amounts of metal.

I made the mistake of thinking I could melt it and roll out my own sheet. However, the trace metals that dental gold contains to make it a good material in your mouth cause it to crack if you try to forge it or roll it out as a sheet. It ruined my whole ingot.

So what to do with a couple gold crowns? A reasonable alternative is to try incorporating the metal into your jewelry. If you have enough material to do a casting, that's probably the best use for dental gold. If you're not into casting, try melting it on a solder pad and while molten, divide it into small pieces with your solder pick. Then re-flow each piece to make little gold balls for use as accents on your designs. The balls can also be planished a bit to make small discs or struck with a design stamp to add texture.

Learn more new skills with:

See all Brad's jewelry books at [Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](http://Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



## FIELD TRIP SAFETY

**S. Department of the Interior**

**U.S. Geological Survey**

**Safety and Health for Field Operations**

**Handbook 445-3-H, February 2014**

(Excerpted by Jim Marburger)

Pick and Shovel, May 2017

**Rattlesnakes** are the largest of the venomous snakes in the United States. They can accurately strike at up to one third their body length. Rattlesnakes use their rattles or tails

as a warning when they feel threatened. Rattlesnakes may be found sunning themselves near logs, boulders, or open areas. These snakes may be found in most work habitats including the mountains, prairies, deserts, and beaches.

**Signs or symptoms** associated with a snake bite may vary depending on the type of snake, but may include:

- A pair of puncture marks at the wound.
- Redness and swelling around the bite.
- Severe pain at the site of the bite.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Labored breathing (in extreme cases, breathing may stop altogether).
- Disturbed vision.
- Increased salivation and sweating.
- Numbness or tingling around your face and/or limbs.

**Prevention.**

- Do not try to handle any snake.
- Stay away from tall grass and piles of leaves when possible.
- Avoid climbing on rocks or piles of wood where a snake may be hiding.
- Be aware that snakes tend to be active at night and in warm weather.
- Wear boots and long pants when working outdoors.
- Wear leather gloves when handling brush and debris.

**First Aid.**

- Seek medical attention as soon as possible. Dial 911 or call local Emergency Medical Services.
- Try to remember the color and shape of the snake, which can help with treatment of the snake bite.
- Keep still and calm. This can slow down the spread of venom. Apply first aid if you cannot get to the hospital right away.
- Lay or sit down with the bite below the level of the heart.
- Wash the bite with soap and water. Cover the bite with a clean, dry dressing.

**DO NOTs.**

- Do not pick up the snake or try to trap it.
- Do not wait for symptoms to appear if bitten; immediately seek medical attention.
- Do not apply a tourniquet.
- Do not slash the wound with a knife.
- Do not suck out the venom.
- Do not apply ice or immerse the wound in water.
- Do not drink alcohol as a painkiller.
- Do not drink caffeinated beverages.

**Bugs.** Bees, wasps, and hornets are found throughout the United States and are most abundant in the warmer months. Nests and hives may be found in trees, under roof eaves, or on equipment such as ladders. tinging or biting insects, spiders, ticks, and other

arthropods can be hazardous to you. Health effects range from mild discomfort or pain to a lethal reaction for those allergic to the venom. naphylactic shock is the body's severe allergic reaction to a bite or sting and requires immediate emergency care.

**Prevention.** Take the following steps to prevent insect stings:

- Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing.
- Avoid perfumed soaps, shampoos, and deodorants. Don't wear cologne or perfume.
- Avoid bananas and banana-scented toiletries.
- Wear clean clothing and bathe daily. Sweat may anger bees.)
- Wear clothing to cover as much of the body as possible.
- Avoid flowering plants when possible.
- If you are attacked by several stinging insects at once, run to get away from them. A shaded area is better than an open area to get away from the insects.
- If a bee gets inside your vehicle, stop the car slowly and open all the windows.
- People with a history of severe allergic reactions to insect bites or stings should consider carrying an epinephrine auto injector (EpiPen) and should wear a medical identification bracelet or necklace stating their allergy.

**First aid.**

- If an person is stung by a bee, wasp, or hornet, have someone stay with them to be sure that he or she does not have an allergic reaction.
- Wash the site with soap and water.
- Remove the stinger using gauze wiped over the area or by scraping a fingernail over the area. Never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers.
- Apply ice to reduce swelling.

**Scorpions** usually hide during the day and are active at night. They may be hiding under rocks, wood, or anything else lying on the ground. Some species may also burrow into the ground. Most scorpions live in dry, desert areas. However, some species can be found in grasslands, forests, and inside caves.

**Symptoms** of a scorpion sting usually subside within 48 hours and may include:

- A stinging or burning sensation at the injection site (very little swelling or inflammation).
- Positive "tap test" (i.e., extreme pain when the sting site is tapped with a finger).
- Restlessness.
- Convulsions.
- Roving eyes.
- Staggering gait.
- Thick tongue sensation, slurred speech, drooling.
- Muscle twitches.
- Abdominal pain and cramps.
- Respiratory depression.

**Prevention.**

- Wear long sleeves and pants.
- Wear leather gloves.

- Shake out clothing or shoes before putting them on.
- People with a history of severe allergic reactions to insect bites or stings should consider carrying an epinephrine auto injector (EpiPen) and should wear a medical identification bracelet.

**First aid.**

- Contact a qualified health care provider or poison control center for advice and medical instructions.
- Ice may be applied directly to the sting site (never submerge the affected limb in ice water).
- Remain relaxed and calm.
- Do not take any sedatives.
- Capture or take a picture of the scorpion for identification if it is possible to do so safely.

**Venomous Spiders** found in the United States include the black widow, brown recluse, and hobo spiders. Spiders are usually not aggressive. Most bites occur because a spider is trapped or unintentionally contacted. Black widow spiders are found throughout North America. They are identified by the pattern of red coloration on the underside of their abdomen. They are usually found in workplaces containing undisturbed areas such as woodpiles, under eaves, fences, and other areas where debris has accumulated. Black widow spiders build webs between objects, and bites usually occur when humans come into direct contact with these webs. A bite from a black widow can be distinguished from other insect bites by the two puncture marks it makes in the skin. The venom is a neurotoxin that produces pain at the bite area and then spreads to the chest, abdomen, or the entire body.

Brown recluse spiders, known as the violin spider, is brown in color with a characteristic dark violin-shaped (or fiddle-shaped) marking on its head and has six equal-sized eyes (most spiders have eight eyes). Brown recluse spiders are usually found in workplaces with secluded, dry, sheltered areas such as underneath structures, logs, or in piles of rocks or leaves. The brown recluse spider cannot bite humans without some form of counter pressure; for example, through unintentional contact that traps the spider against the skin. Bites may cause a stinging sensation with localized pain. A small white blister usually develops at the site of the bite. The venom of a brown recluse can cause a severe lesion by destroying skin tissue (skin necrosis). This skin lesion will require professional medical attention.

**Ticks.** Tick-borne pathogens can be passed to humans by the bite of infected ticks. Ticks can be infected with bacteria, viruses, or parasites. Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tick-borne disease in the United States. Areas with woods, bushes, high grass, or leaf litter are likely to have more ticks. Ticks are usually more active in the months of April through October and peak in the summer months of June through August. Symptoms. Some common symptoms of infection with tick-borne diseases include



STONEY STATEMENTS  
 Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society, Inc  
 PO BOX 891533  
 Houston, Texas 77289

(Postage)

Meeting 3rd Monday of the Month  
 7:30 P.M.  
 Clear Lake Park Building  
 5001 NASA Parkway, Seabrook, Texas



Member of:

**Next Annual Show**  
 February 24-25, 2018  
 Pasadena Convention Center

CLGMS is on the Web:  
<http://www.clgms.org>



American Federation of Mineral Societies

South Central Federation of Mineral Societies

**Clear Lake Gem and Mineral Society, Inc**

MEMBER: American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and South Central Federation of Mineral Societies

PURPOSE: To promote education and popular interest in the various earth sciences; in particular in those hobbies dealing with the art of lapidaries and the earth sciences of minerals, fossils and their associated fields.

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Membership Dues Jan. to Dec. 2017: Adult \$15:00, \$5.00 per additional adult at same address, Junior \$5.00, \$5.00 per member with adult at same address, Family Dues \$20.00 (4+) at same address. Send Dues to CLGMS, PO BOX 891533, Houston, TX, 77289

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