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BIRDSONG SHALE FOSSILS

MIKE BALDWIN : The Birdsong Shale of Vulcan Quarry, Parsons, Tennessee consists of alternating layers of bluish-green clay shale and calcareous [limy] shale beds. The majority of these shale beds are two to three inches thick, although some may be as thick as eight inches. Birdsong Shale, as a whole, is 25-40 feet thick but can reach a thickness of 60 feet.

Birdsong Shale is very fossiliferous in Vulcan Quarry. You should be able to find a number of fine specimens from this location, including corals, brachiopods, gastropods, nautiloids, bryozoans, and an abundance of crinoids [mostly stems]. On a recent field trip to Vulcan Quarry, a softball-sized crinoid calyx [head] was found. Although a large number of trilobites are believed to have inhabited the Ross Shelf [location of Birdsong Shale] during the Devonian Age, few intact trilobite fossils can be found there. Trilobite specimens tend to be very fragile and fragmentary, suggesting that many trilobites may not have survived the fossilization process.



The Phacops [pictured left] was widespread throughout North America during the Devonian Age and is often beautifully preserved. With close examination and determination, you may find a trilobite or two in Vulcan Quarry. The three zones of the Birdsong Shale were named from the dominant fossil types seen within them. The zones are: [1] Trilobite Zone—approximately 22 feet thick; [2] Bryozoan Zone—6 feet thick ; and [3] Brachiopod Zone—33 feet thick.

For fossils found in Vulcan Quarry, your specimen card

should contain the following information:

- [01] Specimen Name
- [02] Site: Vulcan Quarry [Parsons TN]
- [03] County/State: Decatur/Tennessee
- [04] Formation: Ross
- [05] Member: Birdsong Shale
- [06] Epoch: Lower Devonian [408-387mya]

(see Birdsong Shale cont'd on page 4)

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER



W.C. MCDANIEL : Torrential rain was pouring down, turning the parking lot at the old Mall of Memphis site into a small lake. Nearby Nonconnah Creek was surging at its bank. Unfortunately it was the day of and the site for a MAGS field trip. Two things about that day: one characteristic and uncharacteristic. Characteristically, David McIlwain arrived to see if any diehard rockhounds showed up. Two did and David made sure they were taken care of and new plans developed. Uncharacteristically, it was a bad weather day. I used to kid David that he was the best "Dave" weatherman in the Memphis area as he had a knack for scheduling field trips on days that were ideal for collecting. In early September David called to tell me his old employer, Boeing, had recruited him to return to work in the Seattle, Washington area. Before leaving, David donated to the club a considerable amount of materials, equipment and miscellaneous supplies. Thanks to David for his field trip leadership and donation.

September has been awards month for MAGS. In early September we were notified that we would receive the 2006 Petro award from the Tennessee Earth Science Teachers (TEST). Also we were notified that the *MAGS Rockhound News* has received three awards from the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Details are presented elsewhere in the newsletter.

As we begin the process of winding down 2006 don't forget we have several remaining events. On October 14 we have our field trip to Vulcan Quarry and October 21 we conclude our rock swaps for 2006. Our last field trip of 2006 is scheduled for November. We conclude 2006 with Christmas party on December 8.

-- *W.C. McDaniel*

2006-07 Dates To Remember

	Board Meeting	Membership Meeting	Due Date For Newsletter Articles
October	05	13	Sept 23
November	02	10	Oct 23
December	11/30	08	Nov 20
January	04	12	Dec 23

Announcements



MAGS AWARDS

The Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society has been named the recipient of the 2006 Ptero Award. The annual award is presented by the Tennessee Earth Science Teachers (Test) to organizations and individuals who go above and beyond to help earth science education for K-12 teachers. The award will be given at their annual conference in Nashville on November 18. The "Ptero" Award comes from Ptero which is the nickname for Tennessee's Official State Fossil, Pterotrionia (Scabrotrionia) thoracica, designated by act of legislature in 1997. This fossil represents the vast geologic and paleontological riches across Tennessee and commemorates their utility as an educational resource. Recipients receive a plaque with an authentic fossil "Ptero" mounted on the plaque.

MORE AWARDS FOR MAGS!

MAGS Rockhound News has received three honorable mentions in the 2005 editor's contest conducted by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Mike Baldwin for editor of Small Bulletins (3- 10pages), Allen Helt for his article "A Simple Mounting Technique" and W.C. McDaniel for his article "Creeking: How a Rockhound Enjoys a Hot Summer's Day Down South." The regional winners will be announced in December.

AUCTION

The October membership meeting will have the second auction of materials donated to the club by Dick McKittrick. Auction items will include fossils, wood and minerals.

MAGS AT CHUCALISSA

MAGS will display and participate in the annual Chucalissa Heritage Days October 17-20. If you would like to volunteer to cover our booth one of those days let W.C. know. The time is 9 to 1 each day. Those volunteering will be able to bring a small table to sell some of your material to attendees.

October Roadcut

W.C. MCDANIEL : October's Roadcut takes a slight detour and contains a book review, homage and a gripe:

BOOK REVIEW

Brad L. Cross and June Culp Zetner have written **Geodes. Nature's Treasures**. The book takes the geode enthusiast from the deserts of Mexico to the hills of Tennessee by giving the reader a very straight forward account, with excellent pictures, of geodes, thundereggs, septarians and concretions. This geode tour de force is a highly recommended for all rockhounds.

HOMAGE

My Rival Stone Slow Cooker crock pot has cooked its last crystal. Last week after countless years of cleaning quartz crystal from Arkansas, druse quartz from Missouri, Brilliant wood from Alabama and geodes from Tennessee, it wasn't able to muster enough heat. So it's gone. It once cooked 24/7 for about thirty consecutive days, pausing only to have its bowl cleaned. It performed in all kinds of weather, did not complain about the overtime or the burden of the extra pounds. It has been replaced by two other crock pots and they know they have good role model to follow.



A GRIPE

I don't like the decision of the International Astronomical Union to remove Pluto from its current planet status. In protest I have decided to boycott outer space until Pluto gets its place back in space. However, if a meteorite comes crashing down in my yard all gripes and bets are off.

BIRDSONG SHALE *[continued from front page]*

What I would like to do now is give you a look at some of the specimens to be found in the Birdsong Shale.



ANTHOZOA : Streptelasma strictum Conical-shaped coralla [coral] which had a funnel-shaped gullet leading from the mouth to a large central cavity which worked like a stomach. It had tentacles like a hydra.

FAVOSITES : Favosites conicus Favosites foerstei Tubulate corals [honeycomb corals] range from small sheets to massive domes. The walls are thin, perforated by small pores. They lived in shallow water.



TRILOBITES : Dalmanites retusus Paciphacops logani Most trilobite fossils have lost the appendages. These structures do not preserve well. The name trilobite means "three-lobed ones." It might be interpreted as three parts consisting of head, body, and tail. But, in fact, the name actually refers to parts that run lengthwise and are separated by furrows, not joints. These grooves divide every trilobite into an axial lobe in the middle and two pleurae—one at each side of the body.

GASTROPOD : Platyceras The sea snail spent most of their lives in particular resting-places. Platyceras clung to the sides or tops of crinoids so tightly that the gastropods even left marks upon their hosts.



BRYOZOA : Intrapora puteolata Bryozoans are extremely abundant, occurring in vast numbers either independently or attached to other fossils, however they are difficult to identify without using a microscope.

BRACHIOPOD : Leptaena This brachiopod has a shell with a semi-circular outline, with prominent auricles and a straight hinge line. The ornament consists of numerous very fine, clustered ribs, and strong, concentric wrinkles.



BRACHIOPOD : Dicoelosia This brachiopod has a characteristic bi-lobed, near triangular outline. The hinge line is of variable width, but is generally short. Numerous fine ribs diverge near the front of the shell. Dicoelosia attached to bryozoans in shallow to mid-depth water.

NAUTILOID : Michelinoceras [Orthoceras] All long, straight cephalopods with simple siphuncles used to be called Orthoceras. Many of the North American cones are now called Michelinoceras. The shell of the Michelinoceras is shaped like a slowly tapering cylindrical cone and is made up of closely spaced concavoconvex chambers, joined together by a centrally placed tube called the siphuncle.



(see Birdsong Shale cont'd on page 5)

October Birthdays

CORNELIA MCDANIEL : The birthstone for October is opal.

- 1 Susan Hailey
- 5 Matthew Lybanon
- 5 Jon Scilken
- 6 Dick McKittrick**
- 7 Alan Jacobs
- 9 Charles Hill
- 11 Barry Burns
- 11 George Everett
- 11 Tracy Motter
- 13 Michael Baldwin
- 13 Greg Parks
- 16 Dr. Joe Young**
- 18 Emily Randolph
- 20 Anne Laulederkind
- 21 Mathilda Doorley
- 21 Taylor Faddis
- 21 David Sanford
- 24 Peter Doorley
- 24 Raynee Randolph
- 24 Keith Riding
- 28 Anne Fordyce
- 30 Mary Klug



OPAL: Unlike most other birthstones, the opal is opaque - not transparent. The gem is iridescent, reflecting light and seeming to shine with flashing rainbow colors. The true colors of opals range from colorless to white to green to black - the most valuable. Opal comes from the Sanskrit word upala, which means "jewel" or "stone". The best stones are found in Australia, but fine specimens also have come from Mexico, Nevada and Eastern Europe. Opals are the most mysterious of birth-stones. During the Middle Ages in Europe, the gem had a reputation as a "thief stone." It was believed that one who wore the stone could become invisible. The opal symbolized inconsistency and change. Opals change their appearance when temperatures fluctuate. They must have warmth to be at their most sparkling; they turn dull and gray when cold. Such dramatic changes frightened people in ancient times.

BIRDSONG SHALE FOSSILS *(cont'd from page 4)*



CRINOID : Scyphocrinites stellatus Crinoids, called sea lilies, are a complex and beautiful group of stalked echinoderms. Most fossil crinoids were stemmed. The stem was attached by roots to the sea floor or to other animals or plants. The stem bore a crown consisting of a theca [calyx] covered with plates and 5 or more arms [brachia]. Most beds of crinoidal limestone consist mainly of broken stems and few calyces, which may mean that mature crinoids broke loose from their stems and drifted away.

Works cited in article: 1. Kieran Davis; The Paleobiogeography and Palaeoenvironment of the Birdsong Shale (Ross Formation, Lower Devonian, Tennessee; Report Presented to Coventry University, School of Natural and Environmental Science; April, 1996 2. Ida Thompson; National Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Fossils; Alfred A Knopf, Inc.; New York; 1996. 3. Patricia V. Rich, Thomas H. Rich, Mildred A. Fenton, and Carroll L. Fenton; The Fossil Book: A Record of Prehistoric Life; Dover Publishing, Inc.; Mineola, New York; 1996 4. Cyril Walker and David Ward; Fossils: Eyewitness Handbook; Dorling Kindersley, Inc., New York; 1992.

Images in this article courtesy of Index Fossils of North America by Hervey W. Shimer and Robert R. Shrock [1959]; The Fossil Book: A Record of Prehistoric Life; Fossils: Eyewitness Handbook.

McNeil Minerals New Web Site

MAGS members, Jimmy and Hisami McNeil have been dealers in fine minerals since 1980. They buy minerals from miners and dealers all over the world. They also buy old collections when possible.

Some of the minerals Jimmy and Hisami offer are one of kind. If you would like to see what McNeil Minerals has to offer, you can visit them at <http://www.mcneilminerals.com>

Web Site Statistics for September 2006

MIKE BALDWIN : Here's a brief look at our web site, www.memphisgeology.org, from 01/21/2002 through 9/21/2006:

Visits :	157,936	Top pages in the past 30 days:	
Hits :	589,422	rocknews0906.pdf :	593 hits
Average visits/day		home page :	508 hits
(past 30 days) :	215	Explorer0403.pdf :	244 hits
Average hits/day		Explorer0604.pdf :	220 hits
(past 30 days) :	602	Explorer0404.pdf :	416 hits
		argon2003.pdf :	207 hits

(A visit is every time someone comes to our web site. A hit is every page viewed once a user enters our web site.)

October DMC Field Trip

The DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee Presents An Official Field Trip of: the Knoxville Gem & Mineral Society (HOST) and the Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society

**8:30 am , Saturday, October 14, 2006 EST
Graves Mountain, Lincoln County, GA**

Collecting: We will be collecting the cephalon (head) and pygidium (tail) of the Cambrian trilobite *Bountia* sp. From the Conasauga Shale formation. They will range in size from 1mm to 25mm. On rare occasions a complete specimen will be found. For the trilobite collector this will be an opportunity to add a rare specimen to your collection.

Directions: Take exit 350 off of I-40 east or west bound (approximately 40 mile west of Knoxville, TN). You will be able to see a Lowes and Krogers as soon as you exit. We will meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Lowes / Krogers Shopping Center on Highway 70. Park near the SFMS sign. We will convoy to the site at 8:30 am. If you arrive late wait for someone to return for another group at 30-45 minute intervals until approximately 10:00 am.

Tools: At a minimum bring a rock hammer, newspaper (to wrap specimens), and a beer flat or similar item (to hold specimens).

Hazards: Some climbing on loose slippery shale may be involved. This will not be a good trip for small children but teenagers will probably do okay.

Essentials/Accommodations: There are several eateries and motels one exit before 350 and one exit after 350. All are within 6 miles of the collecting site.

Contact: If you have any questions or would like to see photos of specimens, please contact Danny Griffin (865) 406-8802 or email him at GCJINC@comcast.net.

* * *

Field trips are open to all members of associated clubs of the DMC program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee and to all members of SFMS member clubs who have provided their membership with SFMS liability insurance. Because of insurance requirements, members of the GENERAL PUBLIC are NOT invited on this or any DMC program field trips!

DMC Program/SFMS Field Trip committee's purpose: To collect field trip information from its member societies, schedule and coordinate field trip dates, disseminate field trip information to all member clubs so that each member society may publish this information as one of the "official" scheduled field trips.

2006 SFMS Shows

October 6-8, 2006, Gastonia, NC
Gaston Gem, Mineral, & Faceters Club.
29th Annual Show at Citizens Resource Center (Old Biggerstaff Park) on Dallas-Cherryville Highway, Hwy 279.
Contact: Jackay McDaniels at 704.865.6748 or Doug Dover at 704.825.9580

◆ ◆ ◆

November 4-5, 2006, Ft. Pierce, FL
St. Lucie County Rock & Gem Club.
Rock and Gem Show
St. Lucie County Fairgrounds, Midway Rd.
Hours: 4th & 5th, 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Contacts: Dealer Chairman, Dennis Ponte at 772.288.3296 or dennisponte@msn.com and Show Chairman, Norm Holbert at 772.873.0787 or normholbert@bellsouth.net

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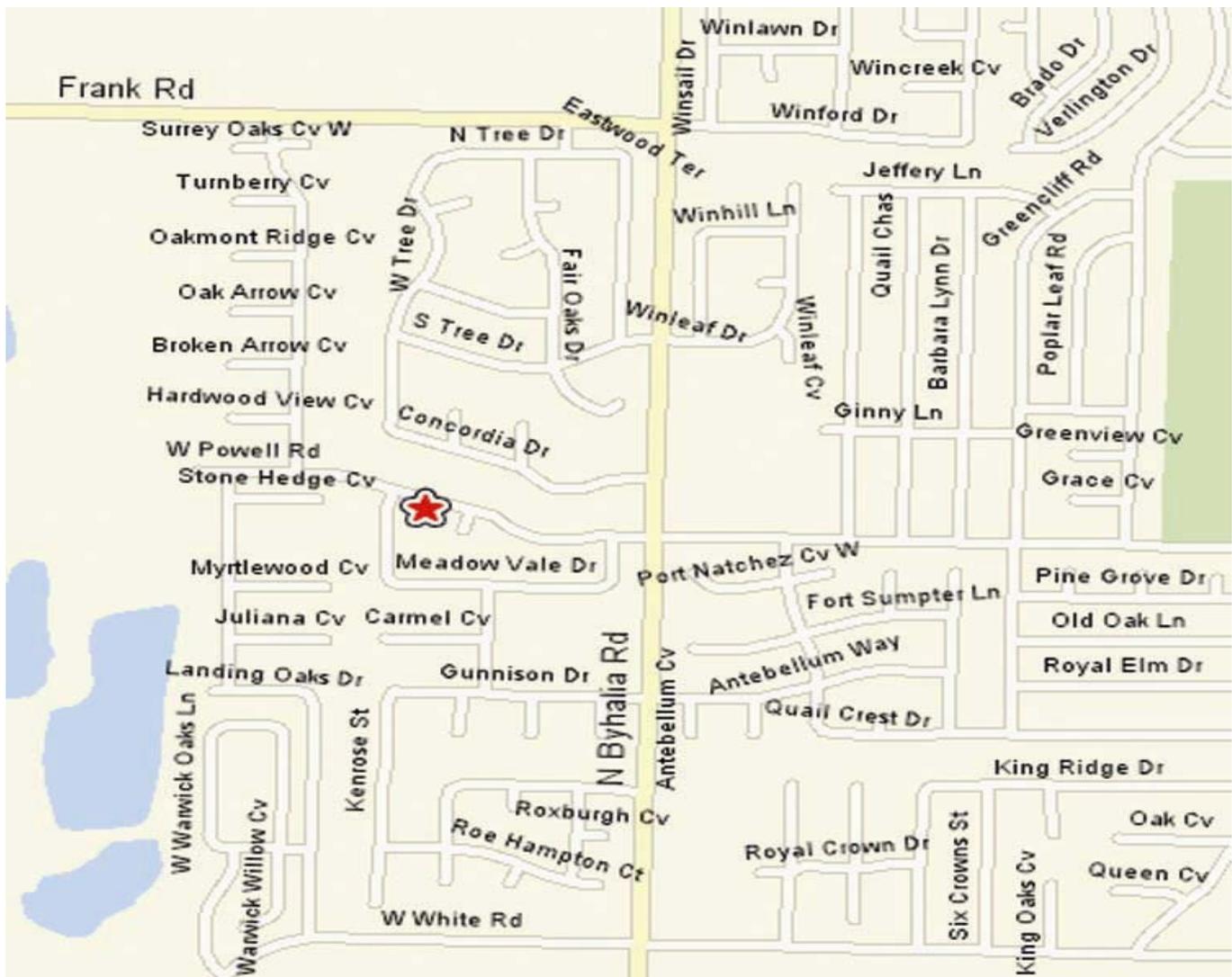
November 10-12, 2006, Pascagoula, MS
Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society 17th Annual Magnolia State Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show.
Jackson County Fairgrounds.
Hours 10:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.
Contact: John M. Wright, 228.875.9192 or osjbw@datasync.com

◆ ◆ ◆

November 17-19, 2006, Marietta, GA
Cobb County Gem & Mineral Society
21st Annual Gem & Mineral Show
Cobb Civic Center, 548 South Marietta Parkway.
Hours: 17th & 18th, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and 19th, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Contact: Mary Ingram at 770.427.1108, www.cobbcountymineral.org/event.html or mimgram@mindspring.com

Don't miss the last rock swap of 2006 !

SHERRI BALDWIN: Alan, Alishia, Harrison and Noa Parks will be hosting the October Rock Swap and Catfish Fry at their home in Collierville on Saturday, October 21 from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm. Alan will be cooking catfish and hushpuppies. You should bring a side dish or dessert (enough for your crew and some to share with the rest of us) and drinks. There will be rock swapping, buying and selling. Please bring your own tables and chairs. If you plan on selling, please bring a specimen to donate for a door prize. Members are requested to bring a shoebox of material for the show's gem dig and/or grab bags. Just started collecting and you don't have enough? That's ok. Come and enjoy the day. The Parks live at 831 West Powell Road in Collierville (901-853-6898). From Poplar Avenue in Collierville, turn north on Byhalia Road, then left at the third light (West Powell Road).



August 2006 Board Meeting Notes

SUSAN THOM : The MAGS board of directors meeting met on August 4, 2006 at the Blue Plate Cafe, 5469 Poplar Avenue, presided by Lou White who opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. The minutes from the board and membership meetings were presented, seconded and approved. In attendance were: Mike Baldwin, James Butchko, Nancy Folden, Shelby Hartman, Sherida Helms, Park and Teri Noyes, Raynee Randolph, Susan Thom and Lou White. The following reports were given: [01] Treasurer report presented by Lou White. The financial report was given, motion made, seconded and the vote carried the motion to approve report subject to audit. [02] Field Trip report presented by Lou White. The June field trip near Frankstown, MS collecting fossils was lots of fun, but hot. Mike and Sherri Baldwin took a group from the YMCA too. The August 19th field trip is at Peabody Place for the oriental jade and ivory carving exhibits. Paul Sides will lead our September field trip to Crowley's Ridge in Arkansas. Anyone in club who wants to join November field trip in Park Hills can join in. [03] Rock Swap report presented by Mike Baldwin. Lou White's home is the location for September 9th (Sunday) rock swap. October 15th is the date for Fish Fry at Alan Parks' home. [04] Adult Program presented by Lou White. Board members will bring cold, canned 6-packs to 5th annual indoor picnic and rock swap. [05] Junior Program presented by Raynee Randolph. The Juniors will have a program on mining equipment by Matthew Huber. David Helms will bring an old gieger counter. The October program will focus on rocks experiments. The youth will have their Christmas party in November. Christmas party. [06] Library report presented by

Nancy Folden. In future the books bought by the club as memorials will be consecutively numbered in the 500 series. Ron Brister to donate 420 page report on Frankstown, MS—very detailed. [07] Editor/Web report presented by Mike Baldwin. Newsletter production went well with Shelby as editor. She's doing a great job. She can always use more material for newsletters! Mike in on the web almost every night. The new website has had three record days of hits. [08] Membership: Steve Hadju has moved to Bloomington, IN. [09] Sunshine report: Sherida had a heart attack days after collecting rocks on the Park Hills MO field trip. [10] Old business presented by James Butchko. He said thanks to all who helped with RMH's "Big Scoop" July 29th. Could not collect money at the fundraiser for RMH at "Rocks Around the Clock" so volunteers gave away polished rocks. Anyone who showed interest in our club received club information cards. [11] Financial committee has received no complaints or notice of discrepancies. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

August 2006 Membership Meeting Notes

SUSAN THOM: The MAGS membership meeting was held at Shady Grove Presbyterian Church on August 11, 2006 presided by W.C. McDaniel. There were 40 members and 3 visitors – Nelson Eddlemon, Mary Enders and John Roland. [01] Welcome to visitors. [02] Nominating Committee for 2007-2008 officers was announced – Alan Parks, Raynee Randolph and Susan Thom. [03] Field trip to Peabody Place Museum next Saturday at 1 p.m. [04] Mike Baldwin has brought a UV light to check for fluorescence in rocks. [05] Fun was had by all at the 5th Annual A Mid-Summer Night's Indoor Picnic and Rock Swap. Lots of great food and the Rock Swap was fun. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Crowley Ridge Trip: Selenite

By Rhena South

I went on the MAGS field trip with my Mom, Dad, Kris, my brother and my grandpa, Nelson Eddlemon and uncle, Steve Eddlemon. It was the first field trip that my grandpa and uncle had ever been on. It was not too hot, but everything was very dry and the grass was tall. My brother, Kris, got stung by a wasp at one of the collecting sites.

My Mom did not know much about selenite. She told me to do some research in the Internet. This is what I found out. Selenite is a crystal form of gypsum. It is sometimes called Satin Spar. It is composed of sulfur, oxygen, hydrogen, calcium and water. It is very soft and can be scratched using your finger nail.

The name Selenite is from the Greek meaning Moon. It is a sedimentary rock from out of saline waters. This makes sense to find it around Crowley Ridge since the area was covered by water millions of years ago.

Some people believe that Selenite has metaphysical properties such as making your thoughts clearer or accessing past information. Some authors use the names of mineral for inspiration. H. G. Wells named some aliens in one of his books Selenites. I had a great time and want to thank Mr. Paul Sides for taking it!

[Sources: MAGS field Trip.Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia, www.galleries.com/minerals/sulfates]



“The Show 500” in 2007

W.C. MCDANIEL : This is a year long program to collect rocks and fossils for the gem dig and grab bags for the **28th annual Mid-America Mineral, Fossil Jewelry Show which will take place April 28 and 29, 2007.** In addition to rocks and minerals, cloth material will be collected to make the grab bags and volunteers will be needed to sew the 500 bags. Each month a targeted donation has been identified. Bring your donations and contributions to the membership meeting according to the schedule shown below:

October	:	Tumbled stones and petrified wood
November	:	Fossils and geodes
Dec	:	Your choice
January	:	Quartz from any locality
February	:	Miscellaneous minerals
March	:	Fossils and tumbled stones
April	:	To be determined based on necessity

The main purpose of Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society is to promote and advance the knowledge of the Lapidary Sciences in the mining, identification, cutting, polishing and mounting of gems, minerals and fossils to the utmost of our geological and lapidary capabilities.

Except for items that are specifically copyrighted by their authors, other societies may use material published in MAGS Rockhound News provided that proper credit is given and the sense or meaning of the material is not changed. Editor: Mike Baldwin, 367 North Main Street, Collierville, TN 38017.

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AFMS NEWSLETTER AWARDS: New Editor 7th – 95 • Small Bulletin Honorable Mention – 04, 05 • Adult Article 10th – 04; Honorable Mention – 05 (x2) • Junior Article 3rd – 98; 8th – 03 • Special Publication 4th – 03

SFMS NEWSLETTER AWARDS: New Editor 1st—86; 2nd—88, 97 • New Editor (Explorer) 4th—03 • Certificate of Excellence—89, 90, 91, 92, 93 • Large Bulletin 1st—87 • Small Bulletin 1st—04, 4th—03 • Special Publication 2nd—03 • Art 77, 80, 81, 82, 86 • Junior Article 1st—03 • Adult Article 2nd— 89, 90, 04; 3rd—92; 4th—85, 04; 5th—91, 03; 6th—87; 8th—04; Honorable Mention—03, 04

DUES: \$20 (Family); \$16 (Single); \$8 (Junior)

OCTOBER 2006

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- Oct 1 9:30 Auction and Move at Fairgrounds Mini Storage
- Oct 5 6:30 Board Meeting at Blue Plate Café, 5469 Poplar Ave.
- Oct 13 7:30 Membership Meeting at Shady Grove Presbyterian
- Oct 14 8:00 MAGS Field Trip to Vulcan Quarry, Parsons TN
- Oct 14 8:30 DMC Field Trip to Kingston, TN
- Oct 17-20 9a-1p Chucalissa Heritage Days (MAGS Booth)
- Oct 21 10:00 Rock Swap at the home of Alan and Alishia Parks



MAGS Rockhound News
367 North Main Street
Collierville, TN 38017