

# ROCK-A-GRAM



February, 2008



Volume 39, No. 6, Page 1

## General Meeting

Thursday, February 21, 2008

7:30 p.m.

Azalea Adult Center

1600 72nd Street North

St. Petersburg

Program:



## Annual Auction

*Auctioneers: Dave Cordes and Bill Schmidt*

Members are asked to bring items to donate for auction. Items do not have to be hobby related, could be something you made, bought, etc. Donate something someone would want. No junk, please. This is a fun time, so bring your money, support our club, and get ready to bid!

AND

## Election of New Officers

If your last name starts with N-Z, please bring goodies to our meeting.

**OFFICERS & DIRECTORS**

*David Cordes*, President ..... 727-443-4706  
 Email: whisgyp@knology.net  
 1227-S Hillcrest Ave.  
 Clearwater, FL 33756

*Bill Schmidt*, Vice President ..... 727-822-8279  
 3939 Porpoise Drive SE  
 St. Petersburg, FL 33705

*Sue Hazelden*, Treasurer ..... 727-321-5732  
 Email: sujagems1@aol.com  
 4823 14th Ave. N.  
 St. Petersburg, FL 33713

*Julia Larson*, Recording Sec. .. 727-522-1254  
 Email: juliamlarsen@earthlink.net  
 5297 Huntington St. NE  
 St. Petersburg, FL 33703

*Walt Upman*, Corr. Sec. .... 727-323-3935  
 3698 18th Avenue North  
 St. Petersburg, FL 33713

*Homer Rankhorn*, 3 yr. Director 727-812-4002  
 15666 49th Street North #1119  
 Clearwater, FL 33762

*Evie Loster*, 2 yr. Director ..... 727-821-7230  
 Email: eloster@tampabay.rr.com  
 2150 23rd Avenue North  
 St. Petersburg, FL 33713

*Terry Bogard*, 1yr. Director ..... 727-523-8046  
 Eemail: Grandpaboggie@yahoo.com  
 15666-49th Street N. #1132  
 Clearwater, FL 33762

*Sue Black*, Past President ..... 727-345-8994  
 8136 22nd Avenue North  
 St. Petersburg, FL 33710

*Debra Bremer*, Editor ..... 727-298-0061  
**ROCK-A-GRAM**

**SGAMS Clubhouse Address: 4619 69th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709, Phone: (727) 541-1291, www.sgams.com**

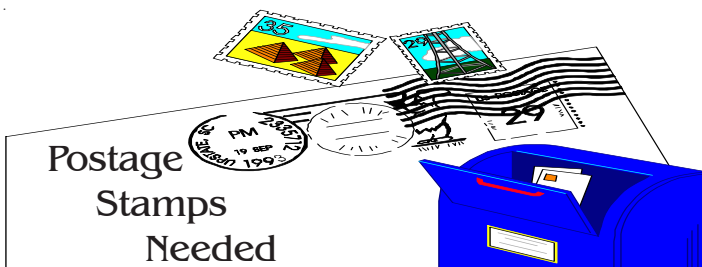
**Clubhouse Activities:** Listed on mailer coversheet and announced at membership meetings.  
**SGAMS Board of Director's Meetings:** 7:30 p.m., 1st Tuesday of each month; September - May.  
 All members are invited to attend SGAMS Board of Director's Meetings at our clubhouse.  
 We solicit your attendance, and constructive suggestions for improving our club.

**Nominations for the 2008-09 officers are as follows:**

- President: ..... Bill Schmidt
- Vice President: ..... Peter Palmer
- Treasurer: ..... Sue Hazelden
- Recording Secretary: ..... Julia Larson
- Corresponding Secretary: ..... Walt Upham
- Past President: ..... Dave Cordes
- 3-year Director: ..... Pat Davis
- 2-year director: ..... Homer Rankhorn
- 1-year Director: ..... Evie Loster

**New Members**

**HANSEN, Mettie**  
**HANSEN, Alida**  
 15 Sand Piper Dr  
 Dunedin FL 34698  
 727-744-4869



Please remember to bring those stamps to the meeting. Stamps must be either off the paper or neatly trimmed with 1/4" border around the stamp. discard any stamps that are torn or defaced in any manner. To remove stamps, wet envelope with a little dish soap and warm water, stamp will fall off. Place stamp upside down on paper towel to dry. Thank you.

**Aluminum Cans Wanted!**

Please bring your aluminum cans to the next meeting. I will take them to recycle. Bring everything you have.

*Sue Hazelden*



**The Suncoast Gem and Mineral Society**  
a local non-profit club proudly presents:  
**38th Annual**

## Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show and Sale

March 7, 8, 9, 2008  
Friday & Saturday, 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Sunday, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Continuous Working Demonstrations**

- ◆ Bead Stringing
- ◆ Wirecraft
- ◆ Channel Work
- ◆ Gem Cutting



**DIAMONDS  
EMERALDS  
RUBIES  
14K GOLD JEWELRY  
DOOR PRIZES  
EXHIBITS  
AND  
MUCH MORE....**

**DIRECTIONS**

- ◆ Minnreg Building  
6340 126th Avenue No.  
Largo
- ◆ From Tampa I-275 cross  
Howard Franklin Bridge.  
At Exit 30, take Ramp  
(right) onto SR-688  
(Ulmerton Rd) Merge  
onto SR-686. Bear LEFT  
(West) onto SR-688  
(Ulmerton Rd) turn  
LEFT (South-East)  
onto US-19 N. Turn  
RIGHT (West) onto  
126th Ave N.
- ◆ From North on US 19  
take 66th Street exit go to  
126th Ave., turn left.

**ADMISSION**  
Adults - \$5.00 good for all three days, children under 6 FREE  
Students with parents or I.D. Card \$4.00

## Show News

When you get this edition of the Rock-A-Gram our gem show and sale will be about two weeks away. There are two parts to having a successful show. The first is getting people in the door to visit our vendors and spend some money with them. The second is being prepared for their arrival: keep them entertained, provide an informative and varied experience, answer all questions or find someone who can, be a helper to smooth their visit and make them want to come back next year.

I want to thank Sue Hazelden, Wilda Bisset, Lou Codol, Gil Wegad, and Walt Upham who came on Saturday and made all those grab bags. Don Schlough has once again sent two boxes (47 #'s worth) of rocks and minerals from New Mexico for the club tables. Pat Davis has 8 RSVP's for the display cases. Mary Able has the demonstrator's tables full. Sue Black has the dealers up to 21 and security is arranged.

The folks who expressed a direct interest in helping their club put on a good show have signed up for a task and time block to lend their talents. I still have some uncovered slots where we could use help. If you have the time and ability to get to the show, contact me directly using the information in the Board of Directors listing at the front of the newsletter or see me and the sign up sheets at the General Meeting on the 21th. As a reminder we need help with set up and break down of the club's equipment and supplies; we staff the ticket booth, information table, club table and the stocking of the hospitality suite. If you need information quickly I can e-mail a description of the tasks involved in each job and discuss what you can do.

We still have business card advertisements and these are very handy to pass along to people you meet, give out at work, and they are easily kept in your wallet or purse. These will be available at the club house and at the General Meeting. We also have a few of the full page fliers to offer. Please get these out to your bulletin boards at work, the company newsletter, a mass e-mail to your co-workers, and any other clubs that you belong to or any place that will allow you to post one. Though, of course, please ask first.

Again let's make this show better than the last one!

Thank You,  
*Bill Schmidt*

## Gem Shows

*Tips and Trips, February 2008*

### March 7-9: Tampa

Tampa Bay Fossil Club

Florida State Fairgrounds, Special Events Center  
4800 S. U.S. Highway 301 N.

Hours. Friday, Saturday - 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Sunday, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.

### March 29-30: Orlando

Central Florida Mineral and Gem Society

Central Florida Fairgrounds

4630 W. colonial Drive

Hours: Saturday and Sunday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

### Federation Websites:

Future Rockhounds of America

[www.amfed.org](http://www.amfed.org)

Lodestar Newsletter

[www.amfed.org/sfms\\_lodestar\\_newsletter.html](http://www.amfed.org/sfms_lodestar_newsletter.html)

EFMLS News

[www.amfed.org/efmls/newsletters.htm](http://www.amfed.org/efmls/newsletters.htm)

## California State Park Closures

The list of State Park closures proposed by Gov. Schwarzenegger include at least 3 of interest to mining history enthusiasts or gem and mineral aficionados:

- Plumas-Eureka State Park
- Malakoff Diggings hydraulic mining site
- California State Mining and Mineral Museum in Mariposa

*Source: Robert Crabill, source the SF Chronicle, Jan. 12, 2008 Mineralog, February 2008*

## There's Coral... and then there's Black Coral

Actually there are more than 500 species of coral, (antipatharians), but only 150 species of black corals. From Hawaii alone, come 14 species of black coral. But the most rare of all black corals comes from the Western Caribbean off Grand Cayman Island from depths of over 200 feet.

The growth rate of this rare black coral is 1/4 to 1/2 inch diameter - every 100 years - which is why it's a protected species by international law and divers are only allowed to retrieve pieces which have broken off a reef naturally (in spite of its firm attachment to the sea floor).

Black corals are carnivores and have a hardness ranging from 4.0 - 5.5 and a density of 2.43 - 2.70 and are found in all oceans, most commonly in deep water habitats of tropical and subtropical seas. Of the 150 species of black coral, some can be found on reef slopes in water as shallow as 3 feet and as deep as 300 feet. Black coral has actually been found growing in depths of up to 20,000 feet. But coral larvae living in shallow waters will always be found in shaded areas where light is extremely limited. Black corals are colonial animals related to sea anemones. Colonies of black coral require swift currents which feed them animal plankton over their polyps. Black coral colonies thrive in deep, and therefore dark waters, usually near drop-offs and ledges.

It is the skeleton of the coral we see in jewelry and not the living coral that produces it. "A thin veneer of animal tissue, called the cenosarc, secretes the tightly-layered central skeleton of horn-like protein. Depending on the

species, the living tissue may be black, red, orange, brown, green, yellow or white. The gelatinous polyps located in this living "bark" are short and cylindrical, their six, non-retractable tentacles are armed with stinging cells."

"Relatively little is known about the life cycle and reproduction of black corals. Like other cnidarians, black corals have life cycles that include both asexual and sexual reproduction. Asexual reproduction (budding) builds the colony by adding more living tissue that in turn secretes more skeleton. Regular growth rings laid down as the skeleton thickens can be used to estimate the age of the colony. Sexual reproduction involves the production of eggs and sperm to create young that can disperse and settle new areas. Polyps are either male or female, but a single colony may be hermaphroditic, with both male and female polyps. The larval stage, called a planula, can drift with currents until a suitable surface is found. Once the larva settles, it metamorphoses into a polyp form and secretes skeletal material that attaches it to the sea floor. Then it begins budding, creating more polyps that will form a young colony. Asexual reproduction can also occur naturally by fragmentation of branch ends."

"Black coral has been harvested for centuries as a charm and a medicine. Early peoples of many cultures believed that black coral had the power to ward off evil and injury. The name, 'antipathies,' means 'against suffering.'"

Hawaii's state gem is black coral as of 1987.

Renowned American designer and master sculptor Bernard Passman has turned black coral into a popular art medium and created works of art for Princess Diana, the Queen of England, President Nixon and Pope John Paul II. For Charles and Diana's royal wedding Passman created a 97-piece black coral and sterling silver tableware service followed by an 11-piece set (in miniature) for Prince William.

The tools used in cutting and carving black coral are similar to those used by dentists.

Bernard K. Passman galleries are located in Georgetown, Grand Cayman Island; St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands; Las Vegas, Nevada; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Ketchikan, Alaska. Bernard Passman has been granted a special permit to work with rare and precious material known as the black gold of the Caribbean. Speaking of gold, his beautiful rings sell for \$20,000 and his famous Ziegfeld girl has a value of \$135,000. Other objets d'art, sculpture and jewelry of Bernard K. Passman can be seen at: [www.passman.com](http://www.passman.com). *Source: Tom Taffel, San Francisco Gem and Mineral Society, www.sfgms.org*

## **THE LITTLE RED HENS: A Fable for Our Times (with apologies to Aesop)**

Submitted by: *Julia Larson*

Once there was a very small group of Little Red Hens. Along with the other animals, they had purchased an old barn that needed to be brought up to code. After a series of unfortunate delays, the animals were finally able to hire a contractor who made the necessary repairs. When the contractor was finished, there still remained a considerable amount of inside work and clean-up before the barn could be used.

The Little Red Hens called a meeting of all the animals and explained the things that needed to be done. "We need volunteers. Who will help us do these things?" they asked. "Well, I would," said the sheep, "but I am too old and just can't do things like that anymore." "That's all right. We understand, Mr. Sheep," said the Little Red Hens. And they did.

"Still, these things *have* to be done before we can actually *use* our nice new barn. We need volunteers to help with the cleaning and dusting and tidying up, and the planting and raking and unpacking and going through all the old stuff, and putting the place to rights. Who can help us with these things?"

"Not I," said the pig. "Not I," said the goat. "Not I," said the cow. "Not I," said the horse. "Not I," said the goose. The rest of the animals didn't even bother to answer.

The Little Red Hens sighed, "Well, we'll just have to do it ourselves." And they did.

Now some of the Little Red Hens were not spring chickens and could only do so much at a time. Some of them even worked full-time jobs and could only work on weekends, and even then, often had other responsibilities they sometimes had to ignore or put off, just so they could work on the barn. And some of the hens had only one wing, which slowed them down. Consequently, it took a long time before all the work was finished.

But at last the work was done. The Little Red Hens organized a grand party to celebrate and show off the new barn. "We need volunteers to cook and bake and serve and clean up," said the hens. "Who will help us with the party?"

"Not I," said the pig. "Not I," said the goat. "Not I," said the cow. "Not I," said the horse. "Not I," said the goose. The rest of the animals didn't even bother to answer.

The Little Red Hens sighed, "Well, we'll just have to do it ourselves." And they did.

Finally, everything was ready. "Who would like to come to the party and live in the new barn?" asked the Little Red Hens. Then all the animals cheered, "We'll come to the party! We'll live in the new barn." And they did.

The moral of this story is - whatever you would like to make of it. But for myself, I would like to offer my sincere and heartfelt thanks to the Little Red Hens.

You know who you are.

## Recipes from Bill

Submitted by: *Bill Schmidt*

The below recipes that were served at the holiday party. Enjoy!

### Spoon Bread

- 1 - 8.5 oz. Box Jiffy Corn Muffin Mix
- 2 - 16 oz. Corn -cans, drained
- 1 - 16 oz. Cream Corn
- ½ cup Butter of Margarine ?1 stick melted
- 1 cup Sour Cream -8oz net weight
- 3 Eggs -beaten

Oil a baking dish (9 x 13), line with one can of regular corn. Mix all remaining ingredients in a bowl. Spoon gently into baking dish leaving layer of corn on bottom undisturbed. Bake at 350 for 45 minutes.

#### Comments;

The original recipe called for only one can of regular corn but I like the extra on the bottom. This is a basic recipe that you can spice up any way you want. Shredded cheese melted on top right after it comes out of the oven makes a nice topping. When making it I am reminded of an omelet. So I wonder how it would taste if you removed the second can of corn and added a cup of chopped onion, green Bell peppers and red Bell peppers? Certainly would look real nice. If you added only a small amount I think you can keep the second can of corn but I would worry about diluting the bread portion so much that nothing was left to hold the corn and additions together. Diced ham could work but might be too salty. How about a south western version with diced hot peppers? Use your imagination.

### Marinated Pork Chops

- 4 pork chops
- ¾ cup sherry
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 clove garlic
- ¼ cup oil
- 1 tsp oregano
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- ¾ tsp ginger

Brown pork chops in a fry pan. Put in a baking dish tightly to make sure they will get covered. Put all other ingredients in a blender and puree for 15 seconds. Pour over pork chops.

Bake at 350 for 1-1/2 hours. Turn once. Cover to keep your oven clean.

#### Comments;

This recipe is always too salty for me. I try to use low salt soy sauce and find plain pork chops. The Smithfield brand I used are self-basting with up to 12% water, potassium chloride, salt, flavorings, preservatives, .... Maybe a real butcher could do better than Sweetbay. The cooking time of 1-1/2 hours seems rather long. This time I fried them to a dark brown and baked for just over an hour. Seems to me that the main flavor comes from the sherry, soy sauce, and garlic. I use Harvey's Bristol Cream sherry, it was around the first time I made the recipe and the strong flavor works well. Never had any actual cooking sherry. With all the different soy sauces around I bet you could get a whole range of flavors. I used plain old La Choy, full salt. I would like to try worchestershire sauce instead some time. I like garlic, maybe some day I'll put in 2, 3, or 4 cloves and see what happens.

**Suncoast Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.**  
Minutes of General Meeting  
January 15, 2008

The meeting was called to order by President Dave Cordes at 7:30 p.m.

The treasurer's report was read. Due to construction expenses, the account is being rapidly depleted.

The first issue concerned volunteers urgently needed to finish the inside work at the clubhouse - things that were not included in the contractor's work, such as finishing the flooring, painting, cleanup, yard work, etc. Dave said, he would be at the clubhouse the following Saturday, and Bill said, he would be there Monday afternoon, so anyone who was able was requested to help.

Dave updated the membership on the status of the contracted work. It is nearly done and will be inspected soon for our Certificate of Occupancy.

Sue Black presented information on the show, including number of dealers and spaces still available. Volunteers are needed to do display cases. Contact Pat Davis, if interested.

Nominees for next year's board were announced. They are:

President: Bill Schmidt

Vice President: Peter Palmer

Treasurer: Sue Hazelden

Recording Secretary: Julia Larson

Corresponding Secretary: Walt Upman

Past President: Dave Cordes

One Year Director: Evie Loster

Two Year Director: Homer Rankhorn

Three Year Director: Pat Davis (nominated from the floor)

***The February program will be the annual auction. Members are encouraged to donate good quality items (not garage sale stuff), and to be generous with their bids. The club desperately needs to replenish the bank account following the construction expenses.***

Following the raffle, Mark Hall gave an excellent program on the beautiful spheres he creates. He had several machines he built and showed the various stages of sphere creation, from raw rock to finished piece. He answered many questions from interested members, and said he would be demonstrating this art at our show in March.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m., after which board members present voted in two new members, Mitte Hansen and her mother, Alida Hansen.

Submitted by:

*Julia Larson*

Recording Secretary

**Suncoast Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.**  
Minutes of Board Meeting  
February 5, 2008

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. Present were: Dave Cordes, Bill Schmidt, Sue Hazelden, Sue Black, Evie Loster, Walt Upman, and Julia Larson. Newsletter editor, Debbie Bremer also attended.

Sue Black updated the board on the show. There are currently 21 dealers, with room for more. A new dealer will have sterling silver pieces and also wire, tools, etc. Still haven't heard back from a couple of the dealers. The security contract has been received. The facility has not yet been paid. Bill presented newspaper advertising costs and the board agreed to them. He has been in contact with Pat Davis on the cases, and she currently has eight members who will be doing cases. He mentioned that the certified appraiser who will do the March program will do a limited number of free, informal appraisals during the show. A sign-up poster will be in the entry area when he clears certain information with the appraiser.

**In other show news:** Set-up for the show will be Thursday, March 13 from noon to 9 p.m. Dealers will be allowed in beginning at 2 p.m. The board agreed to have the minnreg staff set up the tables for us. Sue Hazelden has contacted most of the local television stations about providing notice of the show. Sue Black said, 2009 contracts will be given to dealers, who will be asked for a deposit before the show closes. The 2009 show will be the first weekend in March.

**Membership:** Evie will email a current membership list to Debbie to email the newsletter. The current procedure for printing and mailing the hard copies is working well. Evie will also email the lists to Sue Hazelden, Dave Cordes and Julia Larson, who will each print out a few copies to be available at the February meeting. The need for new members was discussed.

**Clubhouse Update:** The final inspection was failed because the railings on the handicap ramp were set too closely together. The contractor will cover the expense of repositioning them. There being no further problems, we should receive our Certificate of Occupancy when this work is completed and inspected.

Rules for using the cabbng room were discussed and will be posted. The new hourly charge is \$2.50, which will also apply for any classes taught at the clubhouse. The clubhouse manager will collect the fee for the entire night before anyone uses the equipment or begins a class. If members leave early, a refund for unused time will be available. If anyone misuses or abuses equipment, they will be instructed on proper use. If misuse/abuse continues, the member will be asked to leave.

The February program will be the auction. Members are asked to donate good quality items (no garage sale stuff) and to be generous with their bids. We will begin replacing worn wheels and other consumable items when the workshop is opened.

There was no new business. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Submitted by::

*Julia Larson*

Recording Secretary

**Rock-A-Gram**

**WE THANK OUR ADVERTISERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGE  
ALL OUR MEMBERSHIP TO VISIT AND PATRONIZE THEIR BUSINESSES.**

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# **ROCK-A-GRAM**

*This is the official newsletter of the SUNCOAST GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.  
P.O. Box 13254, St. Petersburg, Florida 33733-3254*

This Society is a member of the *SOUTHEAST FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES, INC.*, and its parent society, the *AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES, INC.* The general purpose of this society is to promote popular interest in education and research in the earth sciences and lapidary arts, and to cooperate with other similar organizations.

Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, September through April at 7:30 p.m., at the Azalea Adult Center; 1600 72nd Street North, St. Petersburg, Florida. December and May meetings are special meetings and a time and place will be announced in this bulletin. The public is cordially invited to attend the general membership meetings.

**Dues: \$15.00 single or \$20.00 couple/family; due annually each September**

All exchange bulletins should be sent to the Rock-A-Gram editor.

Feel free to copy any material from this bulletin, but please list all byline credits.

## **ROCK-A-GRAM** (Official Bulletin)

**Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**

*Debra Bremer, Editor*

1349 Lakeview Road

Clearwater, FL 33756

### **Clubhouse Activities**

#### **Board Meeting:**

(September - May)

First Tuesday: 7:30 p.m.

#### **Cabbing Classes:**

TBA

#### **Clubhouse Maintenance:**

TBA

#### **Faceting, Silversmithing,**

#### **Wire Wrapping Classes:**

By appointment