



General Membership Meeting/Social

The annual FM membership meeting and social will be held on WEDNESDAY, FEB. 10. The date change is due to the fact that TGMS exhibitors need to set up on Tuesday afternoon.

The meeting will again be held in the restaurant at InnSuites (now changing its name to Hotel Tucson City Center) at 4:00 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

The annual Board of Directors meeting will be held on FRIDAY, FEB. 12 at 7:30 a.m. in the Lounge at InnSuites. Breakfast will be served. All Board Members, Chapter Members, and Affiliated Representatives are invited to attend. Chapter presidents, if you cannot attend, please recruit someone from your membership to present your chapter report.

REPLY TO REGINA AUMENTE (raumente@aol.com) TO CONFIRM YOUR ATTENDANCE. She would like to get an accurate count so that we do not pay for meals for no-shows.

(Not) Nominating Committee Report

Due to the fact that there is no valid report from the Nominating Committee, it is necessary that all nominations take place during the General Membership Meeting on Wednesday, February 10th. Please notify any Board Member (or fellow member) of your willingness to be nominated, or, if you know some one who would be a productive Board Member, ask him/her if he/she would be willing to serve and then **NOMINATE HIM/HER.**

An email from Robert Housley, Southern California Chapter:

As you have probably heard much of California has already been closed to mineral collecting and there are plans in the works to close off even more. One partial remedy that has been suggested is for mineral clubs to file mining claims on important study localities. Does FM have any position on this idea? Are affiliated Chapters allowed to file such claims? If FM does not have a position perhaps this could be an agenda item for the next meeting.

The reply from Allan Young, FM Board:

Sorry for the delay in responding, and thank you for a good excuse to write about a subject that has troubled me for some time.

First of all, to my knowledge, the National FM does not have an official position on their chapters filing mining claims on mineral collecting sites, but I will check at our next board meeting coming up next month. I do know that many mineral clubs throughout the west have indeed done this in the past, our local club here in Boise included, and there is certainly nothing in the Mining Law that would preclude a club from doing so. A couple of cautions, however: Most clubs, because they have fewer than 10 claims, fall under what is called the "small miner's exemption" which, provided they file the proper paperwork annually, does not require payment of the annual maintenance fee, now \$140/claim. However, if one or more of the club's officers or directors also uses the small miner's exemption for their own claims, and if the aggregate number of their claims and the club's claims exceeds 10, then the club could be responsible for payment of the annual maintenance fee. The second thing is, mining claims only give the locator the EXCLUSIVE rights to the minerals contained therein, provided they are "locatable." (Mineral specimens and gemstones are typically locatable, but not always) When areas containing mining claims are withdrawn from mineral entry, such as with the California Desert Conservation Act, mining is severely restricted if not prohibited on those included claims, and the claims may be subject to a validity examination. If the claim fails the validity examination, then it will be closed. In this case, a mining claim does not provide any protection whatsoever against the prohibition of collecting.

Management of our public lands is becoming more and more recreation oriented. I believe what we need to do is convince public lands managers that RECREATIONAL MINERAL COLLECTING IS NOT MINING, IT IS RECREATION. (What I mean by recreational mineral collecting is that which done with hand tools and results in only minor disturbance. Activities involving mechanized equipment generally require that a notice or plan of operations be submitted.) This activity is frequently not addressed in many resource management plans (which are updated every few years and govern the way the the public lands are managed) and, as a result, how this activity is treated is many times left to the discretion of the local managers. I believe it is in the resource management planning process that the battle for our recreational mineral collecting rights will be won or lost. Many times, the legislation that creates wilderness areas and recreation areas do not contain a specific prohibition against recreational collecting. Such an example was the legislation that created the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. It is only in an obscure entry in an addendum to the Sawtooth National Forest Resource Management Plan that one can find any prohibition to mineral collecting. BLM regulations actually provide for recreational mineral collecting activities within wilderness areas (43 CFR 6302.15), but this can be trumped by local planners. Therefore, I believe what the mineral collecting community needs to do is become much more involved in the planning process. That means getting on the BLM and USFS mailing lists for planning documents, assign someone in each club or organization to be a watchdog, and get their members to write letters to the agencies. Otherwise, I, like many FM members and avid field collectors, am concerned that someday recreational mineral collecting will not be a permitted activity on much of our public lands.



The e-newsletter saves volunteers time and FM money! Help us by getting your newsletter via email!

Ask your chapter secretary to notify National FM, alternatively you may email Regina (raumente@aol.com) or Carol (carolsmith72@msn.com) to receive this newsletter via email.

We respect your privacy and will never share or sell your email address!

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Pennsylvania Chapter: President, Arnold Mogel, 15 Oak Road, Schuylkill, PA, 17972, pioche@verizon.net; website: www.geocities.com/sajas.geo/FM/index.htm

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Southeast Chapter: President, Anita Westlake, 1253 Spencer Avenue, East Point, GA 30344; (404) 761-7849; libawc@emory.edu; website: www.southeastfm.net

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Mineralogical Record Magazine: ex-Officio, Wendell Wilson, minrec@earthlink.com, (520) 299-5274

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Please forward newsletter corrections/changes to Carol Smith, newsletter editor, carolsmith72@msn.com; 303-4639-9090



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Dues Reminder –
Chapter Treasurers &
National Members

It's that time of year again when we beg, plead and cajole you to remit your dues for the coming year. National members please send your check for \$11 to the treasurer, Regina Aumente, 6 Santa Ana Loop, Placitas, NM 87043. Chapters, please send your updated membership lists and dues payments as soon as possible. Your continuing support is needed so that we can afford to communicate with members, provide donations for Chapter symposia, offer awards at the Tucson show, and in other ways provide encouragement for mineral collectors.