

THE MOUNTAIN GEM
Volume XXXVIII FEBRUARY 2011
Number 2

Official Bulletin
Of
The Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina, Inc.

The Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina, Inc. is a founding member of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies. A schedule of our monthly meetings is on the back cover of *The Mountain Gem* as well as on the Society's webpage. Meetings are held at the Macon County Community Facilities Building, Highway 441 South, Franklin, N.C. Visitors are always welcome.

The objectives of this society shall be to effect a close association of those persons who are interested in the study of gems, rocks and minerals and the sciences and arts related to them. We are a working organization that operates and maintains The Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum.

The FRANKLIN GEM AND MINERAL MUSEUM is under the direction of the Board of Directors of The Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, NC, Inc.

The Society and Museum are self-supporting on a 100% volunteer basis.

The museum is open May 1 through October 31.

Monday through Saturday 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

November through April: Saturday 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
FREE ADMISSION.

Membership in the Society is \$15.00 per person with \$10 each additional family member, and \$3.00 for junior (pebble pups).

Membership is from September to September.

Non-member subscription to *The Mountain Gem* is \$15.00 per year. Donations are tax deductible.

The Mountain Gem Staff: Editor, Linda Behr; Assistants: Elizabeth Jones, Sharon and Bob John. Articles written by members of our club may be borrowed provided credit is given to the author and *The Mountain Gem*.



The Franklin Gem and Mineral
 Museum
 25 Phillips Street
 Franklin, NC 28734
 Phone: 828-369-7831

In the Old Jail House
FREE ADMISSION
May 1 - October 31
 Monday Thru Saturday 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
November 1 - April 30:
 Only Saturdays: 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.
 Open Year Round For Tours
 And Special Requests
www.fgmm.org

**2010-2011 Officers And
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Vice President	Wally Smith	369-7695
Secretary	Sharon John	369-0161
Treasurer	Marie Tsacrios	369-5791
Assistant Treasurer	Michelle Loewy	349-3483
Director (2012)	Linda Smith	342-8288
Director (2012)	Marty Martinez	349-4671
Director (2011)	Fred Plesner	349-4224
Director (2011)	Arlon Eldridge	369-5271



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Museum Managers

**Museum Manager	Ray Behr	349-0827
Museum Ass't. Mgr.	Gary Gaetano	369-7697
**Curator	Mary Bedrick	349-1696
Curator Ass't.	Sharon John	369-0161
**Gift Shop.	Doris Smith	369-7695
Ass't. Gift Shop	Elizabeth Jones	349-3877
Museum Workshop	Wally Smith	369-7695
Ass't. Workshop Mgr.	John Hayes	524-8062
Calendar Chairman	OPEN	
** Voting members on the Board		

American Federation
Bulletin Awards

1994 (7th), 1995 (2nd),
1996 (2nd), 1997 (5th),
1998 (5th), 1999 (3rd),
2000 (5th), 2004 (7th),
2005 (2nd) 2006 (10th)
2008 (5th) 2010(3rd)

**2010-2011
Committee Chairmen**

Budget & Finance	Marie Tsacrios	369-5791
	Michelle Loewy	349-3483
Constitution/By-Laws	Joe Nicoletti	941-416-550
Door Prizes	Dean Plesner	349-4224
Education	Diane Aiello	371-2436
Field Trips	John Hayes	524-8062
Gemboree	Jack Jungles	369-6664
Gemboree Ass't.	Fred Plesner	349-4224
Historian	Sharon John	369-0161
Librarian	Dean Plesner	349-4224
Membership	Linda Behr	349-0827
**Publications	Linda Behr	349-0827
Publicity	Fred Plesner	349-4224
Programs	Linda Smith	342-8288
Refreshments	Frances Martinelli	349-9182
Scholarships	Jean Emerson	828-293-7784
** Voting members on the Board		



Southeast Federation
Bulletin Awards

1976, 77, 78, 79, 92, 94, 95
1996-99 (1st)
2003 2nd New Editor
2004 (2nd), 2005 (2nd)
2006 (1st), 2008 (2nd),
2010(1st)

American Federation (AFMS): www.amfed.org
Southeast Federation (SFMS): www.amfed.org/sfms
Franklin Gem Museum and Society: www.fgmm.org
Email for the Society is: franklingemsociety@fastmail.fm

General Meeting
Date: February 24, 2011
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Day: Thursday
Where: Community Center
 on 441 South

Do you have a favorite ugly rock?
 Now is your time to show it off. **Fred Plesner** will be the conductor of the evening. This has to be a fun-filled evening with our loquacious Fred as emcee.

Member News

Reporting by Linda Behr

Thanks to **Marty Martinez** for supplying many of the prizes for the December Party!



Gloria Durfey has been sick with gout and other health issues. We sure do miss her presence at the meetings.

Linda Sterrett will take some of the old club slides and convert them to CDs so that we can use them at monthly meetings.

Ray Behr's brother's wife died in January after a fall and infection. **Ray and Linda Behr** made a trip to Ft. Myers for the funeral.

Mary and Sam Bedrick went to Connecticut to visit their children.

John Hayes has been very busy in the museum. He decided that the museum needed something to keep the cold from visiting the museum. **Ray Behr's** friend Alan Coates, of Coates Designs in Franklin was able to order the special plastic to cover the windows. This expense will come out of the museum's budget. This should help in the summer months when it gets very hot. **Henry Stelling**, our Grant worker and **John** will install the blinds once the windows are finished with the plastic covering.

Bob John developed bacteria in his heart valve and blood. He will be on antibiotics for several weeks.

Michelle Loewy is working on making our newsletters available once more on the club's website.

Reesa Boyce's collage paintings are on display at the Macon County Library only during February. Don't miss her work.

Alex Vuillemin brought his traditional fruit salad to the December Party. Everyone looks forward to this wonderful dish. Alex is not a member of our club. He helps out at the Chamber of Commerce and attends our club's covered dishes when possible.


Fred Plesner is looking for someone to help with the supervision of the Gemborees with **Jack Jungles**. Fred says that he just can't continue as chairman. Someone needs to be in the training process of accepting this very important role for our society.

Club past president from 1988-1990, **Burton Thornal** passed away January 19, 2011. During his tenure as president the society received the prestigious award as Macon County's Outstanding Service Club.

Marie Tsacrios is awaiting the removal of stitches from her ankle from a recent surgery. Other than that she is busy balancing the club's books.

MARCH Birthdays

- 2 – Shirley Burley
- 8 – Diane Aiello
- 14 – John Speer
- 20 – Tom Marsh
- 24 – Gary Gaetano
- 27 – Gloria Durfey



MARCH Anniversaries

- 8 – Tom & Diane Aiello
- 11 – Tom & Elena Marsh
- 12 – John & Dorothy Crawford
- 27 – John & Nancy Speer



**The Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin
Board Meeting of January 25, 2011**

The January 2011 Board of directors meeting was called to order by President **Tom Sterrett** at 6:30 p.m. in the museum meeting room.

Present were: **Tom Sterrett, Marty Martinez, Fred Plesner, Linda Smith, Ray Behr, John Hayes, Marie Tsacrios, Linda Behr** and **Sharon John**. There was one addition to last month's newsletter.: **Marty Martinez** brought the door prizes for the end of the year party. Thank you, Marty.

Treasurers Report: The total income was \$346.30; total expenses were \$827.31, with a deficit of \$481.01.

Museum Manager: **Ray Behr** said that the new cabinet that is in the library will be moved upstairs to the World Room as soon as possible so **John Hayes** can get to the faceting machines for classes.

Asst Workshop Manager: **John Hayes** said there will be no craft night for a couple of months because of the weather. All the old oil in the saws has been disposed and there is a need to get five gallon of white oil. **Marty Martinez** will be checking on that.

Publicity: **Fred Plesner** reported that there will be two new events in Franklin scheduled for 2011. On April 2nd there will be an "April Fool's Trail Days" and on May 7th there will be "Airing of the Quilts."

The deadline for *The Mountain Gem* is February 7th. Please be sure to get all your articles to Linda before that date.

There are no field trips scheduled at this time.

Bruce Siegfried will be giving the program for January.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Sharon John, Secretary

**Spring SFMS Executive
Board Meeting**

Augusta, GA - March 11 & 12

Host Club - Augusta Gem & Mineral Society
Meeting will be held in conjunction with the 23rd
Annual Aiken-Augusta Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show.

Show dates are Friday, Saturday & Sunday -
March 11-13 at Julian Smith Casino 2200 Broad St.,
Augusta, GA.

The show facility is only about 4 miles
from the host hotel.



**The Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin General
Meeting of January 27, 2011**

The January General Meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by President **Tom Sterrett**. There was one guest and 19 members present.

There was an addition to last month's *Mountain Gem*. **Marty Martinez** brought all the prizes for the Rock Bingo Game.

President **Tom Sterrett** reminded us that it is raffle time again and we need to be thinking of a stone and how it should be mounted. Rhodolite Garnet seemed to be a good choice.

Museum Manager: **Ray Behr** passed around February's hosting sheet. Both new cases are in place, one is in the North Carolina room and the second is in the World Room. **John Hayes** and **Henry Stel-line** will be putting Plexiglas on the windows of the museum.

Work Shop: **John Hayes** said that there would be no craft night for a couple of months because of the weather.

Publicity: **Fred Plesner** reported that there will be a Gun Show on February 26th and 27th and that our tables have been reserved for that event. We need an assistant Gemboree Chairman. If any one is interested, please talk to Fred.

Fred Plesner will be giving the Program for February. Please bring an UGLY ROCK!!!!

One of our members, Reesa Boyce has an exhibit at the Macon County Library called Women of the Bible, which will be showing all through the month of February.

Linda Behr presented **Bruce Siegfried** two awards for articles he has written and presented **Sharon John** with an honorable mention for a written features category.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Door prizes winners: #1 **Ray Behr**, #2 **Elena Marsh**, #3 **Linda Behr** #4 **Jackie Loewy**.

Refreshments were served.

Respectfully submitted:

Sharon John, Secretary



March 's newsletter
deadline will be
March 14, 2011.



Tom Sterrett

The President's February Message

If you haven't noticed, it's still cold and wintery out. Not much you can do in the cold weather outside. Inside, projects are progressing slowly – only 11 weeks until we open the museum, May 1. Only seven weeks before most of the mines open, April 1.

Have you signed up to be a host this season? We sure could use your help. Call **Ray Behr** for museum tasks to be done. If you don't want to work at the museum, how about being on a committee, or serving as schedule coordinator? See Ray Behr or me if you'd like to help out in any way.

My wife Linda and I attended the annual Chamber Dinner and Awards Banquet last month. The food was catered by Connie Grueberman of Oak Hill Bed & Breakfast and it was wonderful. LBJ Job Corp helped out as servers. It was a great evening for making contacts and speaking about all we are doing as a society.

Hope you will volunteer this year so we can continue to excel as a club. The Gem & Mineral Society is your club, so please help out.

As always – Rock On!



Bruce Siegfried with one of his plaques that he was awarded for his articles from the SFMS..

Mineral of the Month – Pearls

By Dave Jacobson

For the *Canaveral Moonstone* Feb. 2011

This month we will take a brief look at pearls. Although most any mollusk can produce a pearl, but the better pearls used in jewelry are formed in bivalves, primarily oysters (genus *Pinctada*) and some fresh water mussels (genus *Unio*). They are built up around an irritant of some type, such as a grain of sand. The irritant is encapsulated by mother of pearl which is called nacre. Nacre is composed of microcrystals of calcium carbonate (82-86% aragonite, CaCO₃), conchiolin (10-14%) an organic horn substance and water, H₂O (2%). The conchiolin binds the aragonite microcrystals around the irritant.

The pearly luster is caused by interaction of overlapping aragonite platelets and conchiolin film near the surface of the pearl. The concentric structure causes the interference or breaking up of light falling on the pearls surface, also resulting in the iridescent colors seen on the surface of the pearl. This iridescence is called orient. Pearls with better luster have more and thinner concentric layers of nacre.

The hardness of a pearl is 2.5 to 4.5, although they are very tough and difficult to crush. Pearls are most often white or cream, but can be various pastel shades as well as black. Fresh water pearls can also be dyed various colors such as yellow, green, blue, brown, pink or black. In natural pearls the irritant is typically ingested into the mollusk when the shell is open for feeding or respiration. In cultured pearls the irritant is placed into the shell by man.

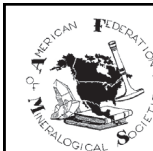
The source of the name pearl is uncertain. Walter Schumann, author of **Gemstones of the World** says, it "may be from a type of shell (Latin – *perna*) or from its spherical shape (Latin – *sphaerula*)".

The following reference materials were used in preparing this article

Gemstones of the World by Walter Schumann.

Gems Crystals & Minerals by Anna S. Sofianides and George E. Harlow

Pearl from **Wikipedia** at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl>



Gems Along the Erie Canal

July 6 – 10, 2011

Syracuse, NY

An extended weekend of fun and friendship

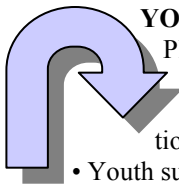
AFMS Uniform Rules meeting - July 6

AFMS Annual Meeting / Cracker Barrel - July 7

EFMLS Annual Meeting - July 8 (evening)

AFMS/EFMLS Awards Banquet - July 9

Breakfast with the Editors and Webmasters – July 10



YOUTH SCHOLARSHIPS for 2011 SFMS WORKSHOP

Please encourage your juniors to apply for the youth scholarships using the criteria below.

When entering the competition:

- President of the sponsoring adult club submits the junior's name with an explanation of the club's qualifications considered in recommending this youth.
- Youth submits a short essay explaining his or her interest in the hobby and reason for wanting to attend a workshop.
- Deadline for applying for the scholarship is March 31, 2011.
- Recommendations should be sent to:

Bonita L. Harris
SFMS Youth Resources
 12520 Jeff Hamilton Road
 Mobile, AL 36695
 251. 865.9157

When attending the SFMS workshop:

- Permission must be obtained from the workshop director and the class teacher. Usually, this is not a problem.
- Responsible adult must accompany the youth to the workshop.

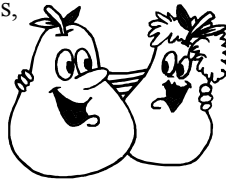
Following the SFMS workshop:

- After attending the workshop of choice, the scholarship recipient is encouraged to write a *Lodestar* article about the experience.

Humor

After 60 years of marriage, a couple who had counted every penny and watched their diets closely died in a plane crash.

When they reached the pearly gates, St. Peter escorted them to a beautiful mansion. "Welcome to Heaven," St. Peter said. "This will be your home now."



The old man asked how much it would cost. "Why, nothing," St. Peter replied. "Remember, this is your reward in Heaven."

The old man looked out the window and saw a championship golf course. "What are the greens fees?" grumbled the old man.

"This is heaven," St. Peter replied. "You can play for free, every day."

Next they went to the clubhouse and saw the lavish buffet lunch.

"Don't even ask," said St. Peter. "This is Heaven, it is all free."

The old man glanced nervously at his wife. "Well, where are the low fat and low cholesterol foods?" he asked.

St. Peter replied, "You can eat and drink as much as you like of whatever you like, and you will never get fat or sick. This is Heaven!"

The old man pushed, "No gym to work out at?"

"Not unless you want to," was the answer.

"No testing my sugar or blood pressure or..."

"Never again. All you do here is enjoy yourself."

The old man glared at his wife and said, "You and your bran muffins. We could have been here ten years ago!"

<http://www.ncfbmagazine.org/2008/09>

On the Lighter Side

Funny Ad Campaign Blunders...

And Slogan Mistranslations from American Advertising Campaigns' in Other Countries and Languages

- Scandinavian vacuum manufacturer Electrolux® used the following in an American campaign:
"Nothing sucks like an Electrolux."
- The Microsoft ® ad slogan, as translated into Japanese:



Sharon John with her certificate for her article (Minutes) from the SFMS.

Someone's Junk is Another's Treasure

...as the saying goes

By Linda Behr for *The Mountain Gem*

While on a recent cruise, the ship's shopping guide talked about chocolate diamonds. Now I just love chocolate and this roused my curiosity.

How did this "throw away" diamond become one of desire?

Before the year 2000, the "chocolate" diamond didn't exist except for the brown diamond. That was until the jewelry house of Le Vian changed the Fancy Diamond to Chocolate. The company gave Halle Berry one to flaunt. Here she was this chocolate diamond walking on Hollywood's red carpet. By changing the way people perceive diamonds, Le Vian made the brown diamond now something of a star-worthy chocolate diamond. Other well-known personalities who own the chocolate diamond are Oprah Winfrey and Jennifer Lopez thus making it no longer a low quality diamond.

Where before it was classified a low C4-C6 rating, the chocolate has found its well deserved place to the enterprising marketing effort of Le Vian.

Found mostly in Australia, South Africa and Russia, these diamonds can be found in many different colors such as blue, purple, green, black, yellow, red and orange and white and brown color. These colors come in different "shades" of: cognac, cinnamon, honey, clove and champagne.



Did you know that the brown diamonds come from about 80% of the mines? Earth makes diamonds at high pressures and temperatures at a depth of 100 to 300 miles. Diamonds are still the world's hardest known stone.

As Kyle Chapman says about purchasing a chocolate diamond:

Natural. These are more expensive because they come from diamond mines. The more intense the color, the more expensive they are. For example, Le Vian's Chocolatier Collection is often displayed with a notice that says "Price available upon request" which actually means you have to fork out wads of money to pay for it.

Cultured. Otherwise known as man-made gems and is often a combination of Chocolate Diamonds and pieces of quartz or crystals. The nice thing about going for cultured chocolate diamond is that you can have the freedom to have your design executed or custom-made without the exorbitant fees as when you have the real thing made to order.

However, I did a little researching online and found that even SAM'S Warehouse® sells chocolate diamond jewelry but not at the low price as one would think. How does \$1,000+ sound? Keep in mind the going rate for gold at this time. Already fake chocolate diamonds have hit the market. Be cautious when purchasing this diamond or any other gem.

Many pieces of chocolate diamond jewelry feature white diamonds as well. The contrast between light and dark sparkling gems can look very attractive.

There were some very interesting comments at <http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-a-chocolate-diamond.htm>

1. I have chocolate diamonds and they sparkle just like white diamonds and I feel quite decadent because not everyone has them. - **anon63594**

2. Chocolate Diamonds are defective if not man-made. They get their color from carbon in the diamond. It is not smoky. You can get them from as low as 8 cents a carat from any industrial diamond seller. No, that was not a mistake. They are used in the concrete cutting blades available at Home Depot. I am in this business and I laugh when I see them on TV. Good diamonds are clear. Anything else is contaminated. - **anon59661**

3. My side stones on my engagement ring are chocolate diamonds and I love them and get tons of compliments! They add some unique but subtle sparkle. I'm a "traditional with a twist" kind of girl and they're perfect for me! - **anon94921**

Sources:

What is a Chocolate Diamond? By Kyle Chapman <http://www.howtothings.com/fashion-personal-care/what-is-a-chocolate-diamond>

<http://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-a-chocolate-diamond.htm>, Written by Sheri Cyprus, Edited by Bronwyn Harris

<http://www.smellybrain.com/chocolate-diamonds/>

Up to 100,000 tons of rock a year fall to earth from space. The largest meteorite in the world lies in the ground in South Africa and weighs more than 60 tons.

Source: *The Tulip City Conglomerate*, August 2010, Via *Quarry Quips* September 2010

Rock Belt Near Wanaque 1.37 Billion Years Old

By Debra Hoover

How old are the oldest rocks in New Jersey and where are they located? Perhaps these questions haven't exactly kept you up at night, but geologists have been wondering about them for a long time.

They know that the rocks in the mountains of North Jersey's Highlands, remnants of ancient Appalachian Mountains that at one time rivalled the Rockies in might, are the oldest in New Jersey. They also accept that these rocks are about a billion years old. But they never knew precisely how old, until now.

The state Geological Survey within the Department of Environmental Protection, teamed up with the U.S. Geological Survey and the Australian National University in a project funded by private grants to provide the most precise dating ever of New Jersey's oldest rocks.

Rich Volkert, a geologist with the state Geological Survey, and a colleague from the U.S. Geological Survey in Denver, collected rocks from the Highlands, which were then analyzed using a highly sophisticated dating technique at Australian National University.

The researchers were able to date the rocks to within nine million years of certainty, a degree of specificity never attained before. They found that the rocks are actually quite a bit older than the generalized billion-year-old estimate ascribed to them.

Most of the rocks fell in a range of 1.02 billion to 1.25 billion years old, but a narrow belt stretching from Wanaque to Ringwood was dated at 1.37 billion years old, making these the oldest rocks in New Jersey.

"Unravelling the geologic history of the New Jersey Highlands from the age of bedrock obviously is interesting to scientists," state Geologist Karl Muessig said. "But it also has practical applications for environmental risk assessment. For example, potassium-rich granites of a certain age in the Highlands contain higher concentrations of radioactive elements than most other granites and are likely to produce higher radon levels in soil and water. More precise mapping of these granites will help better identify areas that may pose greater public health risks from radon."

Geologists have long understood that the mountains of the Highlands were formed during a mountain-building period known as the Grenville Orogeny, which occurred about a billion years ago, a time when land that is now part of South America was adjacent to what is today New Jersey.

"Rocks of the New Jersey Highlands form the roots of the ancestral Appalachian Mountains that were formed during a collision of continental land masses about one billion years ago," Volkert said. "The result of this mountain-building event uplifted the earth's crust in eastern North America, including the Highlands, to heights rivaling the present-day Rocky Mountains."

Hundreds of millions of years of weathering have left erosion-resistant granite and gneiss that form the rugged ridges and steep-sided hills that are characteristic of the Highlands region. But the wearing-away occurred unevenly, meaning the rocks that you see jutting from a hillside or at a valley floor, or even just a short distance from each other * are likely to be of differing ages.

Volkert was joined by John Aleinikoff of the U.S. Geological Survey in looking for a comprehensive cross-section of rocks that would give them their best chances of finding the fine degree of age differences they were seeking.

The rocks were shipped to the Australian National University in Canberra, where scientists used an intense beam of energy to measure the half-life of radioactive isotopes in zircon particles that contain lead and uranium. This method is known as the uranium-lead method of geochronology using the Sensitive High-Resolution Ion Microprobe (SHRIMP) technique.

"This is the state-of-the-art method for determining the precise age of ancient rocks such as those that have been metamorphosed under conditions of high temperature and pressure as is the case with the bedrock in the New Jersey Highlands," Volkert said.

The rocks that the researchers dated are as old as those found in the Adirondacks and parts of south eastern Canada. The belt of oldest rocks is some 350 million years older than previously known. That's quite a difference, even considering the long spans of time geologists work with.

"Consider that it has only been 65 million years since the extinction of the dinosaurs, and 200 million years since continental drift and plate tectonics opened up the Atlantic Ocean," Volkert said. "This is why we are so excited about the new level of understanding we now have about the age of these mountains."

"This type of study is a geologist's dream come true," Muessig added. "Over the years, the New Jersey Geologic Survey has produced significant insights into these ancient and complex rocks, but the analytical methods used in this study have opened the door on the true antiquity of the Highlands. Through a more precise scientific understanding, comes an even deeper respect for these venerable mountains."

SOURCE: NEW JERSEY DEPT. OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Last Updated (Thursday, 02 December 2010 14:48) www.newjerseynewsroom.com

Tom and Elena Marsh suggested this article for our newsletter.

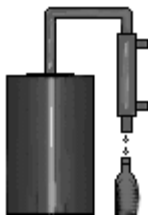
100 Gallons of Whiskey

By Fred Plesner for *The Mountain Gem*

Program Report

by Rex Larkin

There is nothing new about stills and moonshine. It is definitely illegal and on the shady side of the law, but there are people who take a certain amount of pleasure in talking about skeletons in the family closet. This story should cause a few local families to take pride in their heritage because it was possibly the largest such illegal operation in Macon County history.



Sheriff George Moses and his deputies had been aware of an illegal still in operation in the Middle creek area of Macon County for some time and had placed it under observation. They were just waiting for the right time to strike. On Friday, October the 8th, 1971 Sheriff Moses, Deputies DeWalt Hyde and Andy Bradley hiked several miles through the woods and crossed a high ridge to surprise the moonshiners. The still was found in operation and what a gigantic operation it was.

This still could handle close to 4,000 gallons of mash and produce 100 gallons of whiskey a day. This operation consisted of 4 vats which would hold 450 - 500 gallons of mash, a 1,720 vat and a 1,910 gallon vat, all of which were heated by oil burners. For the distillation process one large truck radiator and one car radiator were used. four oil drums were found sitting nearby. In addition to the still several hundred pounds of hog shorts, about one ton of sugar and various quantities of yeast were also found by the small stream that flowed through the area which provided the necessary water supply for the still operation.

Joe Robinson and Albert Carter were taken into custody near the still. At the time of their apprehension they were attempting to leave the scene in a one ton Chevrolet truck loaded with approximately 500 gallons of whiskey in glass 1/2 gallon fruit jars and plastic one gallon milk cartons. In addition to the whiskey loaded truck, a jeep and a small bull dozer were captured at the scene. It was presumed that the bull dozer was used to haul any stuck vehicles out of the mire or to the road.

The vehicles and the whiskey were brought into the Macon County Jail in Franklin. On Saturday afternoon, October 9th, the whiskey was poured down a storm sewer on Phillips Street, where it attracted a large crowd.

As for Joe Robinson and Albert Carter they were released under bond and bound over to Federal Revenue Agents.

At our January meeting, we were ably entertained by our own Bruce Siegfried, who first presented a demonstration of common household products, and their mostly mineral bases.

In my humble opinion, in the tradition of another member, John Hayes, Bruce seems just a little too fascinated with dinosaur poop, coprolites. So I will refrain from telling you just what products come from THAT substance.

Moving along, then: Most people are familiar with talc, slate and chalk. Similarly, pumice. Of course, can be found in various abrasive hand soaps, but how many of us knew that graphite, which is pure carbon, also is related to another pure carbon: diamond. Light bulbs contain tungsten, Pepto-Bismol® contains bismuth, and plaster of Paris, as well as sheetrock, are composed of powdered gypsum. Emory cloth and the interiors of pin cushions are composed of one of our local products, corundum. And not to get too far afield, phosphates, which are used in all manner of products, or were until the EPA got wind of it, is fossilized excrement. Moreover, a common product like sand can be found in glass and sandpaper.

Bruce next proceeded to give us the low-down on various fertilizers and their mineral bases. Perlite and vermiculite are good soil aerators; potash I know is great for fertilizing pecan trees, and lime helps neutralize the soil.

Then, as our collective heads were a swirl with all this newfound knowledge, Bruce engaged in a sadistic maneuver a test he euphemistically called "Stretch Your Brain."

To put it simply, I have had easier times filling out my college boards. We played gamely along, and I think the highest score was 50, so we were graded on the curve. I admit I cheated-I gave myself ten points for spelling my name correctly, and I'm still not sure what a vug is.

Bruce, you gave us a marvelously entertaining show, full of humor and knowledge. Thank you.

American Lands Access Association web site

www.amlands.org

This is a very important site to monitor on what is occurring with government-owned lands.

Our club contributes to the ALAA.

BE SAFE – BE WELL

Don Monroe - Safety Committee

Time – More Valuable Than Silver or Gold

Being involved in lapidary, minerals and precious stones we all are conscious of what we own and what value it represents. I suspect that all of us have gold or silver or stones and probably some equipment to create jewelry. Most of us invest a lot of effort in acquiring additional material to support our hobby. This hobby is often a major portion of our life and provides us with enjoyment, vacation activity and many friends.

If we really think about the important things in life, we must include family, friends, neighbors and all of those folks that mean the most to us. For many of us we must include our children, our grandchildren and maybe even great grandchildren. When we think about all of these we must be realistic about whether or not these offspring will continue the hobby we love. Unfortunately I must place myself in the category of those who are concerned about this issue. There is not an easy answer to questions about the future of our “stuff. We must get those that we love interested in our hobby and that is not always easy since modern families are often scattered about the country. We must try!

Beyond all of the important things we have talked about we must place time. Time is our most important commodity and none of us know how much we have left. I believe it is a reasonable assumption to say that everyone that reads these safety articles is a member of a lapidary school staff or faculty or at least one rock and gem club and therefore a member of at least one federation. If you have been active in these organizations you have probably seen the passing of many friends and associates. These folks we have lost probably did not really have much warning as none of us do and this makes it imperative that we spend our time wisely. If there is a Place you wish to visit or friends you want to see, do it now!

It is not pleasant to contemplate the end of one’s life but it is a fact that we must face. Have a will and if it is not up-to-date, then get it revised. Plan for the disposition of your “stuff”. Make sure that those who are left behind to “clean up your mess” know exactly what you want to have done. Be sensitive to the desires of those who are important to you because I have never known of a will that did not have something hurtful in it usually because the deceased did not think.

If there are things to be disposed of, consult your heirs. You may feel that this is a truly morbid article but I guarantee you that there “will be one or more readers who will appreciate it.

The Mysterious Azotic Topaz

By Sharon John for *The Mountain Gem*

Topaz of any type is a good jewelry stone and it is historically one of the most important gemstones. With its relatively high refractive index and hardness of eight on the Mohs scale, it can be used in any jewelry application, but should be protected from hard knocks.

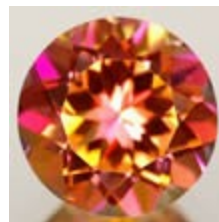
A new high tech enhancement process applied to colorless stones such as topaz and quartz has created a colorful new variety called Azotic Topaz named after the company that invented the patented process.

Azotic Topaz displays a stunning rainbow effect that makes it unique. The color, brilliance and clarity of the final product depend very much on the quality, cut and polish of the original gemstone.

Brazil is the most important supplier for topaz. Other deposits are in Afghanistan, Australia, China, Japan, Madagascar, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, United States and Zimbabwe.

Azotic topaz is a high tech achievement that successfully conquered nature.

The Egyptians believed that topaz was colored with the golden glow of the mighty Sun god Ra. This made topaz a very powerful amulet that protected the faithful against harm. The Romans associated topaz with Jupiter, their god of the sun. In ancient times it was believed that topaz helped to improve eyesight. The Greeks trusted topaz’s supernatural power to increase strength and make its wearer invisible in times of emergency. Topaz was also said to change color in the presence of poisoned food or drink.



Source: GemSelect.com
Picture from Gem Select

Upcoming Shows

Mar 11-13, Augusta, GA – Augusta and Aiken Gem & Mineral Societies 23rd Annual Aiken-Augusta Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show, Julian Smith Casino, 2200 Broad St. Hours: Fri & Sat 10am-7pm, Sun 10am-4 pm. Admission: \$3 Adult, children under 16 FREE with an adult. Contact: www.aikengmfs.org or www.augustagemandmineralsociety.org.

SFMS President Barbara Green

Jan. 2011 LODESTAR (condensed for publication)

Happy New Year, Y'all (as we say here in the South). I am very honored to have been elected by you to serve as your President for this year.

First let me introduce myself. As a member of the Western South Carolina Gem & Mineral Society (WESCAGEM), I have held office in this organization for the last 5 years. I am a jewelry artist who combines beads & stones to make jewelry. I quickly realized that this society was just what I had been looking for and was delighted to find so many people with whom I had so much in common. It was also a good fit for my husband. Whenever we travel, I have to check his pockets before I do the laundry because he picks up rocks where ever we go. We have both learned much from the folks in our club.

One of my passions is passing on knowledge. About the same time I joined WESCAGEM, I was asked to teach seed beading at William Holland. So that brings me to where I want one of our focuses to be this year -- SFMS workshops.

And finally, I want to remind all local club Presidents that one of your duties is to attend the Federation meetings. If you are unable to attend, have your club appoint an alternate to go in your place. If we don't have local club input, we cannot do our jobs as Federation officers. In the 1980 January issue of the Lodestar, the then new President, Charles Tinman, issued the same challenge of getting involved. SFMS is only as good as the people who are willing to work for it. We still have many openings on committees and we need more people who are willing to take on these jobs. Please join us.



Pictured is Reesa Boyce in front of one of her collages at the Macon Library. We hope to soon have her give a program on her very interesting hobby.

DMC Field Trip Sponsored by Augusta Gem & Mineral Society
Dixie Mineral Council Field Trips
The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc
The Friendly Federation - Founded in 1976 to serve.
DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee
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An Official Field Trip of The Rome Georgia Mineral Society, Rome GA (HOST)
An Official Field Trip of the Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, NC, Inc.



9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. EST
Saturday, February 26, 2011
Durham Mines, Walker County, Georgia
Pennsylvanian Age Plant Fossils
Rockcastle Formation

The Durham Mines are Georgia's best locality for beautifully preserved Paleozoic plant fossils. Commonly referred to as "Fern Fossils", but more accurately described as "Coal Fossils", the site offers a wide variety of species: Lycopods such as *Lepidodendron*; giant horsetails such as *Calamites* (and its leaves known as *Annularia*); and seed ferns such as *Pecopteris* and *Alethopteris*. You can occasionally find fossilized seeds. For identification purposes, we will provide a sheet to get you started, but any good fossil book will be useful as well when you get home.

The fossils are found by splitting the abundant shale at the site. Most will yield twigs and bark, but with persistence you will find good leaves.

Meet: At the site, on Durham Rd. in Walker Co., Ga. This is in the NW corner of the state of Georgia.

430 Durham Rd, Rising Fawn, GA 30738
Contact: Jeff Deere, Rome Ga. Mineral Society
Field Chair - H (770) 386-5447, C (770) 655-2298
wjdeere@comcast.net or
jeff.deere@brownind.com

Funny School Excuse Notes

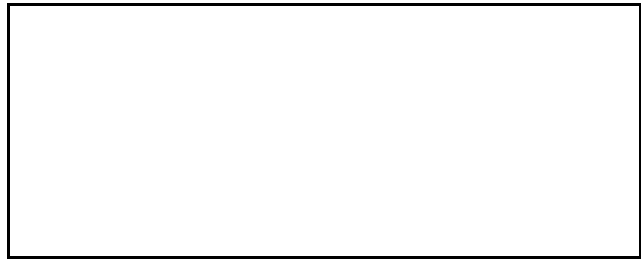
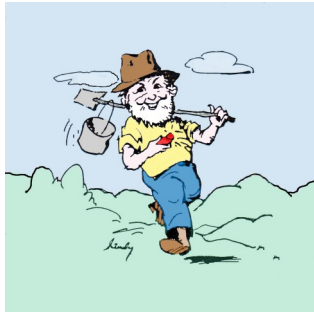
- Ralph was absent yesterday because of a sour throat.”
- “Please excuse Joey Friday. He had loose vowels.”
- “Please excuse Joyce from jim today.”





THE MOUNTAIN GEM

Linda Behr, Editor
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website: www.fgmm.org



Save Stamps for SFMS Scholarship

July Gemboree
July 28-31, 2011
Saturday 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Sunday noon-5 p.m.

MONTH	BOARD	GENERAL
JANUARY	25	27
FEBRUARY	22	24
MARCH	29	31
APRIL	26	28
MAY	24	26
JUNE	28	30
JULY	19	21

General Meetings: 6:30 p.m. the last Thursday of the month (note changes)
West Large Meeting Room of the Macon County Community Facilities Building
HWY 441 S

Meeting changes will be posted in the monthly newsletter.

Board Meetings: 6:30 p.m.

At the Franklin Gem & Mineral Museum
All Board Meetings are open to the members.

If you want to submit something before the Board, contact the President prior to meeting.