

THE MOUNTAIN GEM

Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina

ESTABLISHED 1972

November 2021 Newsletter

WWW.FGMM.ORG

p. 02 President's Report
p. 02 October Meeting Minutes
p. 04 Gift Shop News
p. 05 Painted Rocks
p. 06 Cabochon Classes Resuming
p. 07 Leaf Looker's Gemboree
p. 08 Gemboree Raffle Winner

In This Issue

p. 08 Education/Tours
p. 09 Corundum Hill Field Trip
p. 10 Did you know?
p. 11 Sand in a Bottle
p. 12 Bench Tips
p. 13 Upcoming Shows
p. 15 Announcements
p. 16 Officers, Directors, & Committee Chairs

Cover Photograph – Spruce Pine Emeralds in Matrix
By Stacy Walbridge



PRESIDENT'S REPORT



As we get close to the end of another year I would like to thank all the members who have helped with the museum. It has been a very difficult year due to COVID. A lot of members have really put forth the effort to help out. THANKS!!!!!!

At the last meeting I asked for volunteers to help set up the new display at the museum. These were: Marsha Harmon, Brad Fleszar, Don McDonald and, last but not least Ron Rossomando. To these I am really indebted for the heavy work involved in setting up the new display. Come down and check out the changes to our museum.

I wish everybody well and hope to see you at the next meeting.

OCTOBER 28th GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by President Mark Laing on Thursday, 10/28/21, at 6:30 p.m. at First Christian Church of Franklin.



Minutes – Mark Laing asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the September meeting as printed in the newsletter. Norman Holbert made a motion to amend last month's minutes to include the certificates of appreciation given to Al Pribble, Jane Morgan, and Susan Fritz. Marsha Harmon seconded the motion. Voted and passed.



Treasurer - Kathi Walbridge reported that our income exceeded our expenses due to doing so well at Pumpkin Fest and donations. Kathi also stated there needs to be a resolution about the signature cards. All members needing to sign need to be at the bank at the same time if possible.

President: Mark Laing stated the need for the following positions to be filled; Assistant Curator, Secretary, and refreshments. Please consider volunteering.

Museum Manager: Larry Ellert stated the new vanity at the Museum will be completed as soon as his hand is healed. Matt Castor needs all personal items removed from the workshop as soon as possible.

Museum Curator: Mark Laing needs several strong volunteers on November 8th at 10:00 a.m. to move a display case for the new exhibits.

Gift Shop: Anamay Rossomando wanted to pass along a message thanking all the volunteers at the Pumpkin Fest and Gem Show. A special thank you to Robbie Morgan-Kirkpatrick for the lovely painted rocks that also generated revenue for the Museum.

Newsletter Editor: Stacy Walbridge stated the deadline for the newsletter is November 10th.



Display case now in place

Publicity: George Fritz stated the Club is being recognized in The Franklin Press.

Membership: Tom Parker stated 29 members and 1 guest attended the General Meeting. Anyone needing a badge or to pay dues please contact Tom Parker.

Field Trips: Marsha Harmon introduced Helen Rogers as the new Field Trip coordinator.

Education: Marsha Harmon stated we are still waiting on COVID restrictions to be lifted.

Streets of Franklin: Charlotte Frye stated there is nothing new to report on at this time.

Gemboree: Norman Holbert stated the need for a new Gem Show Chairman. Please consider volunteering. The Leaf Looker's Gemboree show was a success with the set up and tear down. There will be a Gem Show on May 14th, 15th and 16th, the weekend after Mother's Day and we are in need of volunteers.



Scholarships: Al Pribble stated that a \$300.00 scholarship was granted to Union Academy in Franklin.

Programs: The Programs Chair is vacant and the club is looking for a volunteer.

Old Business: As Susan Fritz is no longer the Secretary, Christine Castor has agreed to volunteer temporarily but the position still needs to be filled. Please consider volunteering. Mark Laing stated that on several occasions doors and windows had been left unlocked and more training and reminders are needed for closing the Museum.

New Business: Starting in November the Museum hours of operation will be going to one day a week. John Hayes stated there will be sign-up sheets for Cabbing and Faceting classes with a \$50 fee for Cabbing and \$75 fee for Faceting. Everything needed for the classes will be included.

There being no further business the General Meeting was adjourned by President Mark Laing at 7:30 p.m.

Following the meeting refreshments were available and two very informative videos of The Crater of Diamonds was shown followed by a silent auction.

GIFT SHOP NEWS

By Anamay Rossomando

We would like to Thank & Welcome Bushy Hartman for accepting the position as gift shop assistant manager. We are looking forward to a new & improved gift shop. With record breaking sales this last weekend, we are bringing out new merchandise. If you haven't had a chance to stop by, never too late, plus get a head start on gift giving ideas. We are also working on getting t-shirts.

We would like to thank Robbie for getting Mark Dove of the Franklin Rock Painting Group to join us at Pumpkinfest & donating the proceeds of the sale of their rocks their members made to us. We hope they will join us in any other upcoming events we have. They added fun to our booth & with all our members that helped out another great sale day.

Once again thank you to all who host & help out, we couldn't do it without you.



PAINTED ROCKS

By Mark Dove

Thanks to geologic processes of heat, pressure and the relentless march of time, our earth yields up hidden treasures in the form of beautiful gemstones such as rubies, sapphires, emeralds, amethysts and a host of others. Many of these awesome gems can be seen on display at Franklin's Gem and Mineral Museum. Their more dull and mundane cousins; ordinary rocks, now have their chance to gain attention as well, thanks to the efforts people young and old, participating in the Kindness Rocks movement.

Back in 2015, someone found a rock on the beach at Cape Cod that said "You've got this", written by a woman named Megan Murphy. This person, a friend of

Murphy, was inspired to leave other message rocks in places for people to find in hopes of brightening someone else's day. Thus was formed what we now know as the Kindness Rocks Project. Towns all across the United States and all over the world have Kindness Rocks organizations for the purpose (from the Kindness Rocks Project website) to cultivate connections within communities and lift others up through simple acts of kindness.



Silent Auction winner showing off the winning prize in our Museum.

Our local Kindness Rocks organization was started by Martha Holbrook, owner of the Mossy Rock store, back in 2017. Called Franklin NC Rocks, a number of free rock painting party events have taken place where folks could come and paint a rock with a simple design, intricate picture or inspirational message. The back of the rock would have "Franklin NC Rocks" on it and then the rock would be sealed with a clear coat.

The artist could keep the rock when finished, gift it to a friend or hide it somewhere else for others to find. They're encouraged to not leave the rocks inside of a place



of business without the owner's permission or inside national parks in accordance with the "leave no trace" principle.

Finders are encouraged to snap a photo of the rock, post it to the Franklin NC Rocks Facebook page, and then hide the rock elsewhere. Our rocks have been found as far away as California, the Florida Keys and even overseas in Ireland and France.

It may be a pretty slim chance of finding a beautiful ruby or sapphire just lying around on the sidewalk here in Franklin, but one has a good chance to picking up one of these hand painted treasures as they stroll through our downtown.

Editor's Note: During Pumpkinfest we shared our space on Phillips Street with the Kindness Rocks organization, who kindly donated several painted rocks to the Museum Gift Shop.



!!! CABOCHON CLASSES RESUMING !!!

After almost two years of COVID, we plan to start up the cab classes beginning sometime in December or January. I have posted a sign-up chart at the gem museum. We give the class to two members at a time, so pick a person that you would like to have as a partner. Most classes will start at 10 am and will run till 4 or 5 pm with time out for lunch, coffee breaks, and camaraderie. However we will try to be very flexible. Could be every day, every other day, or whatever works. (It's great to be unemployed.) The cost is 50 dollars paid by check to the gem club. The club will furnish all materials to cut and polish at least 5 stones or more according to a person's progress. Most classes can be completed after about 16 hours. Safe workshop procedures will be emphasized!

Because of personal health issues, it is strongly recommended that my students have had both COVID shots and preferably the booster shot as well. Masking will be optional. Brownies are always appreciated. If there is someone in the club who would like to teach one or more of the classes let me know, or speak with Matt Castor, Workshop Manager.

Thank you,
John Hayes



LEAF LOOKER'S GEMBOREE





GEMBOREE RAFFLE WINNER

By Ron Rossomando

The winner of the Member Made, Sterling Silver, Wire Wrapped, Rain Forest Jade Pendant Raffle was Ms. Sharon Quarles of Deland, FL and a member of the Daytona Club. She purchased her ticket at the Gemboree. She mentioned to her club that she had a great time at the Gemboree and noted how easy it was to purchase tickets and how well organized the Gemboree was. Her prize was mailed to her on Friday, 10/29.

After she received the pendant she immediately wrote back and enclosed a picture. She wrote, "It was a pleasure to get your phone call stating I had won the raffle. It was such a nice surprise. Please thank the member who made the pendant. It is absolutely beautiful and I will enjoy wearing it. Again, thank your members for having such a nice gem show.



Sharon Quarles showing off her prize.

EDUCATION/TOURS

By Marsha Harmon

While we are open to receiving tours from groups of all sizes into our Museum, COVID has detoured most of Macon County Schools from participating this school year. Please remember that is not all we do. There are many educational presentations we are responsible for.

With the help of Anamay Rossomando, our County library currently has two displays: one with Southeastern US Quartz specimens and another with materials from our gift shop, Macon County courthouse has one as well on its first-floor level, East Franklin Elementary School and Franklin High School are accommodated as well



Mineral and gift displays at the library



and Rickman's Store although not having regular hours this time of year has a small display of interest.

Thank you Anamay for your endless assistance to our Education program and constant work in keeping up our gift shop.

CORUNDUM HILL FIELD TRIP

By Helen Rogers



Ilah and Reagan Williams searching for Sapphires

In the October 2021 issue of 'The Mountain Gem', Fred Plesner (Curator Emeritus of the Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum) wrote an article about Corundum Hill Mine. During the mid-nineteenth century, the mine produced fine gems, as well as abrasive materials. In its heyday, it was producing 100-200



Helen Rogers enjoying the day



Matt Castor doing the heavy lifting while Stacy Walbridge keeps his feet dry.

tons of corundum annually. It was with this knowledge and enthusiasm that we met on a cold and rainy Saturday morning with visions of rubies and sapphires in our eyes. After a short trip up the mountain by car we descended by foot to a private stream to sift and dig. Nine stalwart souls descended to the stream that day, and eighteen soggy



soles emerged. Garnets of 1-3 mm in size were present in sifted sands, in addition to larger pieces of quartz, citrine and mica. However, none of our party were rewarded for their efforts with rubies and sapphires. **sigh** Even so, spirits were high and everyone seemed to enjoy the outing! We would like to thank FGMS members Doreen and Dave Freeman for allowing us to visit and mine on their property. Maybe all the big gems are on top of the mountain! We'll find them next time!

Speaking of which...with Thanksgiving nearly upon us, we're going to skip an outing for November, and plan for our next trip on December 11th. Please let me know your interest in a trip to Diamond Hill Mine in Abbeville, SC. If you're interested in this trip, please email me (helen.rogers.clay@gmail.com). I will send out details once I gauge interest to visit and mine on their property. We'll find those gems next time!

Did you know?
(From The Glacial Drifter-Nov 2021)

A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two-tired.
What's the definition of a will? (It's a dead giveaway).
She had a boyfriend with a wooden leg, but broke it off.
A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
With her marriage she got a new name and a dress.
Show me a piano falling down a mineshaft and I'll show you A-flat minor.
Marathon runners with bad footwear suffer the agony of defeat.
When a clock is hungry it goes back four seconds.
The man who fell into an upholstery factory is now fully recovered.
You feel stuck with your debt if you can't budge it.
He often broke into song because he couldn't find the key.
Every calendar's days are numbered.
A lot of money is tainted. It taint yours and it taint mine.
Santa's helpers are subordinate clauses.
Bakers trade bread recipes on a knead to know basis.



SAND IN A BOTTLE

By Ron Rossomando & Fred Plesner

The next time you visit the Museum, go into the North Carolina room, turn right and walk up to Case # 6. On the top shelf, in the left corner is a Sand Bottle with a beautifully designed landscape. Who did the design and how was it done?

Following is the story behind the bottle.



Doyle Blalock creating a sand painting in a bottle

The sand is local sand and mica, the bottle was made by Doyle Blalock in 1981 at the Gemboree, and acquired by the Museum. For over 20 years he frequented craft shows and demonstrated his ability to make sand sculptures in bottles. Children loved watching him do it and many times he let them try their own hand at doing it. It was a big hit at the Gemborees back in the 1970's.



On display in the museum.

Doyle Blalock was known as the Sandman. He had the talent to design sand sculptures using different colors of sand. There is a YouTube video of him doing that and he explains why and how he does it.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xehXZp8A4-A>).

Doyle Blalock passed away on April 23, 1997, he was 77.



BENCH TIPS

Photograph and Article by Bradford Smith

MARKING YOUR TOOLS



It makes sense to mark your tools if you ever lend them to friends or take them out to classes or workshops. Question is how to mark them permanently. For metal tools, I use a very small ball bur running fast in the Dremel or Foredom to "engrave" my initials. Other times I'll form the initials with a number of hits with a center punch.

But for hammer handles and other wooden tools, the country boy in me came back and thought "Why not make a branding iron?" If you'd like to try one, all you need is a little scrap copper or nickel about 22-24 gauge, a piece of heavy brass or copper for a base, about 6 inches of metal rod and a piece of wood for the handle.



I formed my initials from a couple 4mm strips of sheet nickel. The "S" was one piece, but the "B" was three pieces soldered together with hard. (Remember to form the letters backwards). I then soldered the letters with medium onto a piece of 1/8 inch thick brass bar to act as a heat sink. Finally, I soldered a piece of 1/8 round rod on the back of the brass bar as a shaft to join to a wooden handle.



Smart Solutions for Your Jewelry Making Problems

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



UPCOMING SHOWS

Columbia Gem & Mineral Society
A Non-Profit Educational Organization

Try A Trilobite

53rd Annual 2021



Gem Mineral & Jewelry Show

Jamil Temple

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Columbia, SC 29210
Exit 106 Off I 26

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803-736-9317

\$1.00 Off
Coupon

2021 CGMS
Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show
19-21 November 2021

Jewelry, beads, loose stones, fossils, minerals,
gold, silver, & tools for sale. Geodes sold & cut.

Club member's rock collections on exhibit
& lapidary demonstrations.
South Carolina amethyst on display.
Lots of fun for the whole family.



Nov. 19, 10-6
Nov. 20, 10-6
Nov. 21, 12-5
 Adults \$5.00
 Children 16 & Under Free
 All Military Free
 3 day pass \$10

November 20 – 21, 2021; West Palm Beach, FL

Gem, Mineral Jewelry, Bead and Fossil Show
 Gem & Mineral Society of the Palm Beaches
 Sat: 9AM-6PM; Sun: 10-5PM, South Florida Fairgrounds, Expo Center East,
 9067 Southern Blvd., West Palm Beach, FL 33411, FREE Parking
 Adults/Seniors \$9; Children under 12 free; 2-day pass \$14; see website for \$1 off coupon
<http://www.gmspb.org/>

November 26 – 28, 2021; Mobile, AL

Mobile Rock and Gem Society Annual Show
 Abba Shrine Center at 7701 Hitt Road, Mobile AL (36695).
 The doors will be open from 1:00-6:00 PM on Friday, from 9:00am-6:00pm on Saturday and from 10:00am-5:00pm on Sunday. Admission is \$5.00 (\$1.00 off with coupon) and children under 12 are FREE with an adult! Weekend pass for an individual is only \$7.00.



**Jewelry, Gems, Crystals, Minerals,
Fossils & Rocks**

Annual Sale 2021
 Thanksgiving Weekend
 November 26, 27, & 28

Abba Shrine, 7701 Hitt Road, Mobile, AL

Join Us!



December 3-5, 2021; Montgomery, AL

The 51st Annual Montgomery Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show
Garrett Coliseum, 1555 Federal Drive, Montgomery, AL 36107
\$1 Wheel of Fortune

Adults \$2.00 daily or \$3.00 for a 3-day weekend pass. 18 and under free with student ID or one paid adult ticket. Free parking. Free door prize ticket only with each paid adult admission.

Friday & Saturday: 9-6, Sunday: 11-4

Dealers will have beads, crystals, geodes, rough, cabochons, gem stones, finished jewelry, tools, supplies, and mineral and fossil specimens. Club members will display their individual collections and will give demonstrations on gem and rock cutting, faceting, and cabochon making.

<https://montgomerygemandmineralsociety.com/mgms/index.php/annual-gem-show>

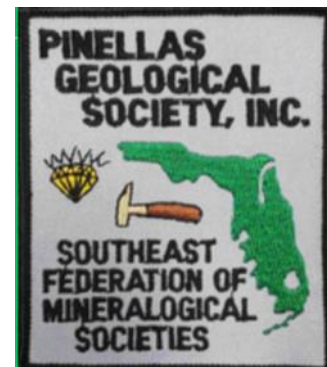


December 10-12, 2021; Lawrenceville, GA

Annual show; Bellpoint; Gwinnett County Fairgrounds, 2405 Sugarloaf Pkwy., Enter on Davis Rd; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Adults \$5, free admission for children under 15 when accompanied by a paying adult. Select dealers from near and far selling exquisite minerals, gems, jewelry, beads, rocks, healing stones, geodes, fossils, crystals; contact Damian; Email: mbellpoint@gmail.com;

January 14-16—LARGO, FLORIDA:

Annual show; Pinellas Geological Society ; Central Park Performing Arts Center , 105 Central Park Drive; Fri. 10-5, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-5; Adults \$2, ages 12 and up; contact Leona Feldhausen , 2655 Nebraska Avenue #247, Palm Harbor , FL 34684, (727) 709-3236; Email: Sheffieldleona@gmail.com



February 10-13 TUCSON, ARIZONA

The Year of Fluorescent Minerals. The Fluorescent Mineral Society (FMS) celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021. In recognition of this milestone, the Tucson Gem & Mineral Society has invited the FMS to feature fluorescent minerals at its fluorescent themed 2022 Show and will be providing space for the FMS to organize a world-class exhibit of fluorescent minerals. The Tucson Gem and Mineral Show® is the main event for the more than 40 individual rock/gem/mineral shows that come to life every February in Tucson, AZ. Visit <https://tucsongemshow101.com/schedule-2022> for more information.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

November Board Meeting

6:00 pm Tuesday, November 16th, 2021

First Christian Church of Franklin
156 Belleview Park Road
Franklin, NC

November General Meeting

6:00 pm Thursday, November 18th, 2021

First Christian Church of Franklin
156 Belleview Park Road
Franklin, NC

No Newsletter for December

December Holiday Meeting Saturday, December 12th, 2021

---- Rock Bingo ----

Additional information will be provided
First Christian Church of Franklin
156 Belleview Park Road
Franklin, NC



Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina
Established 1972

Club Officers and Board of Directors

President: Mark Laing, (864-910-1580)
 Past President: Jane Morgan, (828-342-8703)
 Vice President: Al Pribble, (828-342-3119)
 2nd Vice President: Larry Ellert, (727-455-1849)
 Secretary: Christine Castor (Temporary)
 Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge, (802-598-7025)
 Assistant Treasurer: Charlotte Frye, (727-455-1849)
 Museum Manager: Larry Ellert, (727-455-1849)
 Director (2023): Matt Castor, (828-421-8701)
 Director (2023): Marsha Harmon, (828 369-7262)
 Director (2022): Susan Fritz, (828-524-4936)
 Director (2022): Charlotte Frye, (828-200-6023)

The Club is a member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the Southeast Federation of the Mineralogical Societies.

Committees

Membership: Tom Parker and Diane Mason
 Museum Curator: Mark Laing, (864-910-1580)
 Curator Emeritus: Fred Plesner, (828-349-4224)
 Museum Gift Shop: Anamay Rossomando (828-349-2807)
 Gift Shop Assistant: Bushy Hartman (850-868-1576)
 Museum Workshop: Matt Castor, (828-421-8701)
 Publicity: George Fritz, (828-524-4936)
 Field Trip Coordinator: Helen Rogers (404-784-2531)
 Program Coordinator: Vacant
 Museum Calendar: Vacant
 Gemborees: Vacant
 Education/Tours: Marsha Harmon, (828 369-7262)
 Asst Education/Historian: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)
 Web Master: Melissa Barfield (803-724-8312)
 Newsletter Editor: Stacy Walbridge, [fqmseditor@gmail.com]

