

# ***The Mountain Gem***

## ***October 2023***

**Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, North Carolina**



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*Special thanks to Pam Martin for her cover photo of an Opal.*



## From the President

**Varshana Dholakia**



Hello Club Members,

I'm excited to take on the position as your new president of the gem society. The members and board have been very supportive. I know many of you personally from doing gem shows and living in the Franklin area and being in this field for many years. Many of our board members are returning in their officer positions from last year, including Kathi Walbridge as treasurer, Chandra Fox as our secretary, Charlotte Ellert as assistant treasurer, Stacy Walbridge as past president and Larry Ellert as museum manager. Please welcome our new board members Earl McGaughey, Carl Seaman, our VP Dr. Susan Ray. A special Thank you to all our committee chairs for the work they are doing.

We're actively looking for members to volunteer their talents such as hosting at the museum, accounting/bookkeeping, fieldtrip organizers, and standing committee members, such as Programs, and Refreshments, to help us organize in ways that help the Society. We are seeking volunteer coordinators who can match members' talents with current needs.

We always need volunteers helping us at the 3 Gem Shows in Franklin. Our next show is scheduled from October 20 to 22 2023. I want to thank all those who stepped up and volunteered, but we still need more! You can volunteer by calling the museum or sign up at the museum.

Following the Gem show, our October 26<sup>th</sup> general meeting will highlight a program "All About Jade" presented by Karen Warseck. Come to the meeting and support Karen who is travelling here from Florida just to make the presentation.

Join us for light snacks & refreshments. Meanwhile, keep rockin' and let's have a great year!

**Varshana**

## General Meeting Minutes

### Franklin Gem and Mineral Society

#### General Meeting

September 28, 2023

Thursday 6:30pm

First Christian Church

Franklin, NC

The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm by Stacy Walbridge.

Minutes: Chandra Fox ( [fgmshows@gmail.com](mailto:fgmshows@gmail.com) ). Motion made, and minutes accepted as written.

Installation of New Officers: Presiding over and performing the administration of the society's oath to incoming and continuing officers is our Honored Guest, Macon County Commissioner Gary Sheilds. Mr. Shield's graciously thanked the society for the invitation and honor of returning once again to serve. Mr. Shield



asked members to keep Ronnie Beale and his family in our thoughts tonight.

Stacy Walbridge: Announcement: In the museum we have had a theft. Additional security cameras will be installed.

Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge. ([FGMM.Treasurer@mail.com](mailto:FGMM.Treasurer@mail.com)) / Charlotte Ellert. From Rpt. Income exceeded expenses. Museum giftshop sales are going strong, especially credit card sales. The Museum has been open M, W-S this month – no hosts seem available on Tuesdays. Thank you to all the hosts and gift shop volunteers. We received our portion (of proceeds) from the Macon County Chamber of Commerce for the July Gem Show. We received a letter that a North Carolina Sales & Use Tax Return Form E-500 was not filed for the tax periods: 4/1/2019-6/30/2019, 7/1/2019-9/30/2019, and 10/1/2019-12/31/2019. Ron Rossomando assisted to compile the amount due and this has been filed and paid on 9/1/2023.

There were two (2) \$300 mini-grants awarded to Mountain View Intermediate School.

Gem Show: Chandra Fox. ([FGMShows@gmail.com](mailto:FGMShows@gmail.com)) Rpt. July Gem Show went well and the treasurer has received the societies proceeds from the show. We have our last Gem Show of the year coming up in October. The “Leaf Lookers Gemboree” will be held at the Robert C. Carpenter Center in Franklin, NC. Show setup begins on Thursday, October 19, 2023. We will open to the public on Friday (10/20), Saturday(10/21) and Sunday(10/22). We still need volunteers to fill some areas such as demonstrations and club table hosts. The signup sheet is available at the museum or online. Thanks to everyone for volunteering, wherever you volunteer. You are greatly appreciated!

Vice President: Larry Ellert. ([cleckert@yahoo.com](mailto:cleckert@yahoo.com)). No Report

Museum Manager: Larry Ellert. ([cleckert@yahoo.com](mailto:cleckert@yahoo.com)). Donavon McDonald No report

Workshop: We have been really working hard in the workshop. John Hayes and Chandra Fox have continued with multiple Cabbing and Corundum classes.

Gift Shop: Anamay Rossomando. ([anamay@verizon.net](mailto:anamay@verizon.net)) Absent. Rpt. Starting in November we will reduce our hours back for the winter to Saturday only.

Newsletter Editor: Note: There was an error in the newsletter reported by Stacy Walbridge. The corrected version is available through the museum website. Deadline for submissions to the newsletter: October 16, 2023 Send pictures to be included in future editions of the newsletter to: [fgmseditor@gmail.com](mailto:fgmseditor@gmail.com)

Museum Host Scheduling: Charlene Galbrecht.. In November, the museum will be returning to winter hours. Saturday only.

Publicity: Kim Price ([kprice@safeworksinc.com](mailto:kprice@safeworksinc.com)) Rt. Gordon Mercer from “Citizens Making a Difference” will conduct an interview on October 16, 2023. The interview will broadcast Saturday, October 21, 2023 on 104.1 or 104.7 FM, 1050 AM

Scholarships: Al Pribble. ([alton36@gmail.com](mailto:alton36@gmail.com)) Two local teachers have expressed interest in our education scholarship. More information will be provided as it becomes available.



Future Vision: Ron Rossomando. Kim Price. ([kprice@safetworksinc.com](mailto:kprice@safetworksinc.com)).

50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee. Reported Kim Price. Kim presented banner proof to membership. The Halloween event will be held October 21<sup>st</sup> from 1-4pm at the museum. This will coincide with Pumpkin Feast. We are promoting the history of the jail through costumed characters. If you are interested in being a character, contact Roberta Pipitone for more information. Some of the expected events include interesting and scary recollections', Scavenger Hunts for adults and children, candies, gift bags, grand prizes and more.

Membership: Roberta Pipitone, Leonard Pipitone. ( ). NRpt. (59) members and (2) guests present

Education: Marsha Harmon. ([monaleaf28734@gmail.com](mailto:monaleaf28734@gmail.com)). Rt. In November, Cowee Heritage Days will be coming up.

Programs: Kim Price ([kprice@safetworksinc.com](mailto:kprice@safetworksinc.com)). Karen Warseck "The Mystery of Jade". Karen has presented before and does a fantastic job. Come and learn more about the secrets and tricks of identifying real and fake jade.

Constitution / By-Laws Committee: Al Pribble ( [alton36@gmail.com](mailto:alton36@gmail.com)), Larry Ellert ([clellert@yahoo.com](mailto:clellert@yahoo.com)).

Old Business: No Report.

New Business:

John Hayes and Chandra Fox presented "Certificates of Completion" to Charli and Rodney Grey. Charli and Rodney Gray successfully completed a beginner's cabbing class. They did a fantastic job and have polished two Petosky Stones for our door prizes tonight. Congratulations Charli and Rodney and keep up the good work. Fred Plesner presented "Certificate of Lifetime Membership" to Jane Morgan, Ron Bischoff and Marsha Harmon.

Gary Shields administered the oath of office to:

Board of Directors 2023-2024:

Earl McCaughey, Carl Seaman, Stacy Walbridge

Gary Shields administered the oath of office to:

President: Varshana Dholakia

Vice President: Susan Ray

Secretary: Chandra Fox

Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge

Assistant Treasurer: Charlotte Ellert

Meeting Adjourned 7:12p.m. by Varshana Dholakia.

## October Program

October's program is "All About Jade" presented by Karen Warseck. Come to the meeting and support Karen who is travelling here from Florida just to make the presentation. Karen has presented before and does a fantastic job. Come and learn more about the secrets and tricks of identifying real and fake jade.



## Museum News

### Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum Hosts Mountain View Students

Fifteen middle school students and two teachers toured the museum last week as part of their Geology studies. The students are part of Mountain View School's English as a Second Language Program.

Because the students moved here recently from Honduras, Ukraine, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Haiti, (retiring Education Chair) Marsha Harmon and (incoming Education Chair) Susan Ray located in the museum those gems and minerals prevalent in each student's home country and made sure our guides Ron Rossomando, Karl Williams, and Marsha Harmon pointed the stones out to the student groups.

The students spent 90 minutes touring all areas of the museum, including the old jail cell and the Fossil Room – their two favorites! At the conclusion of the tour, each student was given a bag of various rocks, and the classroom received a large geode for permanent display.

Several area schools will have future field trips throughout the school year to the museum. Some of the schools, like Mt View, apply for and may be awarded FGMS scholarships to help offset field trip expenses which can be as much as \$300.



Museum Host Karl Williams leads students through the NC Room



Museum Host Ron Rossomando explains displays in the International Hallway



Museum Host Marsha Harmon points out items in the Fossil Room



Welcome to Jim Carpenter, our new Museum Curator.



## Gift Shop News

**Anamay Rossomando**

Starting in November we will reduce our hours back for the winter to Saturday only.

## Education



John Hayes and Chandra Fox presented “Certificates of Completion” to Charli and Rodney Gray. Charli and Rodney Gray successfully completed a beginner’s cabbing class. They did a fantastic job and have polished two Petosky Stones for our door prizes tonight.

Congratulations Charli and Rodney and keep up the good work.

Left to right John Hayes, Susan Ray, Charli Gray, Chandra Fox Rodney Gray



Fred Plesner presented "Certificate of Lifetime Membership" to Ron Bischoff, Jane Morgan, and Marsha Harmon.

## Membership

**By Roberta & Leonard Pipitone**

Please welcome our new members. If you see them out in our community say "hey"

Anna Adams - [dragonflyismine143@gmail.com](mailto:dragonflyismine143@gmail.com)

Capt. Richard A. Brown (Allen) - [rur2gom@icloud.com](mailto:rur2gom@icloud.com)

William and Giselle Lamm - [wiliam.lamm@icloud.com](mailto:wiliam.lamm@icloud.com)

Ted and Joellyn Reckwerdt - [tat6030@yahoo.com](mailto:tat6030@yahoo.com)

Joe Whitenton and Kathryn Owens - [whitecloudjoe@yahoo.com](mailto:whitecloudjoe@yahoo.com)

If you are a new member and haven't had your picture in the newsletter, please see Kim Price or Pam Martin at the October meeting. We will get your picture taken for the November newsletter.



## DMC Field Trip – Tuskegee, Alabama

Stacy Walbridge

On September 30<sup>th</sup>, Kathi and I joined 50 plus rockhounds in Tuskegee, AL for the DMC field trip to Uphapee Creek. Sponsored by the Montgomery Gem and Mineral Club, the day promised to be hot and dry. As we arrived at the Montgomery Club member's cabin parking was a little chaotic but we found a spot about 200 yards from the sign in station. Soon after we parked a young man in an ATV stopped by our car to chauffeur us up to the cabin. We signed in, received a raffle ticket, and were directed to the loading area where tractor pulling wagons transported us about a mile to the creek.



Check-in Station



Lining up for transport to the collecting area

The creek was low, exposing 20 to 30 yards of river washed rocks from pea size to baseball size. The collecting area ran about a half mile along the creek allowing plenty of room for the numerous collectors. After a few minutes looking around, Kathi and I settled in a shaded area and started examining the rocks.

It was quickly evident that the majority of the rocks were collectable quartz of colors from dark red to brown. The club president told me that the majority of the rocks were washed down from a significant quartz bearing area resulting in carnelian, smoky quartz, quartz with tourmaline inclusions, as well as some petrified wood.



Closeup of the Creek Bed



By 1:30 we had collected a bucket full of different shades and sizes of quartz and decided to call it a day.



**Wading for Carnelian**

While waiting for transport back to the cabin we ran into a member from the Cobb County Gem & Mineral Club who found a fantastic 2-foot-long petrified wood specimen. He was proud of his find but said that the memories of him and his 13-year-old daughter collecting today were the best part of the trip. Returning to the cabin we were treated to a meal of hot dogs, chili, drinks, and cookies. Kathi and I grabbed a couple of chairs under the shade to load up on food and drinks before the long drive home. It was then that the raffle began.

The Montgomery club had about 20 choice petrified wood specimens that were given out to the lucky attendees. The final grand prize drawing was for a 30+ pound petrified wood specimen that was won by a member of the Columbia, SC rock club.

Overall, it was a great day collecting, we met some wonderful folks, and the Montgomery Club members were tremendous hosts for this DMC trip.



**Grand prize winner**



## Upcoming Shows

G&LW Asheville - 10/31/2023

Start Date: 10/31/2023

End Date: 11/1/2023

Hours: Tues 10:00-6:00 Weds 10:00-3:00

Address:

765 Boylston Highway

WNC Agricultural Center

Asheville, NC

Website: <https://www.glwshows.com/>

MAGMA Land of the Sky Christmas Holiday Gem Show - 12/8/2023

Start Date: 12/8/2023

End Date: 12/10/2023

Hours: Fri/Sat 9:00-6:00 Sun 10:00-5:00

Address:

39 Spring Cove Rd

Land of the Sky Shrine Club

Swannanoa, NC 28778

Website: <http://www.americanrockhound.com/>



## Club Meetings

Date	Event	Time	Program	Snacks
October 24, 2023	Board* Meeting	6:30		
October 26, 2023	General Meeting	6:30	All about Jade by Karen Warseck	Theresa & Lake Holland
November 28, 2023	Board* Meeting	6:30		
November 30	General Meeting	6:30		Pot Luck

**\* Please Note:** Board Meetings are held at the Museum  
All members welcome

General Meetings First Christian Church of Franklin 156 Bellevue Park Road Franklin, NC	Board Meetings Franklin Gem & Mineral Museum 25 Phillips St Franklin, NC 28734
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## From the Editor

My sincerest thanks to all contributors. It's so great to see the photos and learn about members. I'd love to have some photos for the cover too. And remember to caption everyone in the photo as well as credit the source. Please submit all entries, comments and corrections to [fgmseditor@gmail.com](mailto:fgmseditor@gmail.com).

**Newsletter Deadline is November 19**



## Officers, Board of Directors, and Committees

### Club Officers and Board of Directors

President: Varshana Dholakia, 828-342-3135  
Past President: Stacy Walbridge, (802-598-9548)  
Vice President: Susan Ray, 727-798-7207 (M)  
Secretary: Chandra Fox (706-982-0402)  
Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge, (802-598-7025)  
Assistant Treasurer: Charlotte Ellert, (727-455-1849)  
Museum Manager: Larry Ellert, (727-455-1849)  
Museum Manager Assistant: Donovan MacDonald 828-226-3131  
Board of Directors  
Earl McCaughey  
Carl Seaman  
Brad Fleszer  
Charlette Ellert

### Committees

Museum Curator: Jim Carpenter, 828-736-3678  
Curator Emeritus: Fred Plesner, (828-349-4224)  
Museum Gift Shop: Anamay Rossomando (828-349-2807)  
Gift Shop Assistant: Vicki Knisley (828-371-4954)  
Museum Workshop: Don Coffee (706-982-3600)  
Membership: Roberta & Leonard Pipitone, (828-332-2837)  
Publicity:  
Field Trips:  
Program Coordinator:  
Refreshments: Charlene Galbrecht (954-592-1377)  
Constitution and By-Laws: Al Pribble (828-342-3119)  
Future Vision: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)  
Museum Calendar: Charlene Galbrecht (954-592-1377)  
Gemborees: Chandra Fox (706-982-0402)  
Scholarships: Al Pribble (828-342-3119)  
Education/Tours: Susan Ray (727-798-7207)  
Asst Education/Historian: Ron Rossomando (828-349-2807)  
Newsletter Editor: Mary Beth Stager 404-314-2469  
[\[fgmseditor@gmail.com\]](mailto:fgmseditor@gmail.com)

### Congratulations to our new Officers and Directors

Presiding over and performing the administration of the society's oath to incoming and continuing officers was our Honored Guest, Macon County Commissioner Gary Shields.



First Photo: Left to Right Assistant Treasurer: Charlotte Ellert, Vice President: Susan Ray, Secretary: Chandra Fox, Treasurer: Kathi Walbridge, President: Varshana Dholakia,

Second Photo: Board of Directors 2023-2024 Stacy Walbridge, Carl Seaman, Earl McCaughey

