

THE MOUNTAIN GEM
Volume MMXIV FEBRUARY 2014
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 web-page. 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 Society and Museum are self-supporting on a 100% volunteer basis.

**The FRANKLIN GEM
AND MINERAL MUSEUM**

is operated under the direction of the

Board of Directors of

The Gem and Mineral Society of Franklin, NC, Inc.

School tours are always available by contacting our Education Chairman, Diane Aiello.



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

Society email:

franklingemsociety@gmail.com

Editor: themountaingem@fastmail.fm

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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)



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

General Meeting

Date: February 27, 2014

Day: Thursday

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Place: Macon County Community
Center on 441 South

Program: Emeralds of Brazil



**Newest members:
Jane and Doug Morgan**

Hello again

from the president

Arlon

Once again I would just like to thank all the officers and members for all the hard work and the time they put in the museum. I would like to give a personal thanks to Marty Martinez for a great program at our last meeting and remind everyone he will have another great program at our next meeting. We now have a new computer and we can complete our budget and some other matters that we have gotten behind on as this was not the only reason we got behind as the weather played a big part in the delay. Thanks again and looking to see everyone at our next meetings.



March newsletter deadline will be
March 10th.

I'm still looking for club members' "rock" articles.
Thanks to Laura Anderson and Al Pribble for this month's pictures.



Minutes – December 14, 2013 – General Meeting**The Gem & Mineral Society Of Franklin, Inc.**

The meeting was called to order by president, Arlon Eldridge at 1:10 p.m., in the Community Center meeting room.

Arlon Eldridge welcomed county commissioner Ronnie Beale to our End of Year party.

Museum Manager – Al Pribble had nothing to report.

Curator – Fred Plesner had nothing to report.

Gift Shop – Elena Marsh wished to thank everyone who hosted in the museum and gift shop this year. She asked everyone to remember all the items available in the museum when thinking of last minute Christmas gifts and reminded us that members received a 10% discount on all purchases.

Publicity – Fred Plesner had nothing to report.

Education – Diane Aiello had nothing to report.

Membership – 30 members and 10 guests were present. There were two new members: Doug and Jane Morgan.

Commissioner Ronnie Beale stated that he was working on getting us signage for the highway in order to direct more visitors to the museum.

Arlon Eldridge asked Dean Plesner to give a blessing prior to the End of Year party/banquet and playing rock bingo.

There being no further business, the president adjourned the meeting at 1:20 p.m. Members and guests then enjoyed a wonderful afternoon of eating, socializing, listening to music and playing rock bingo.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan L. Fritz, secretary

New Members,

If you have not had your picture printed in the newsletter, please remind me at the next meeting. Others want to know you!

Minutes – January 30, 2014 – General Meeting**The Gem & Mineral Society Of Franklin, Inc.**

The meeting was called to order by President, Arlon Eldridge, at 6:45 p.m. in the Community Center building meeting room.

Arlon reported that the Board Meeting scheduled for 01/28/14 was postponed due to snow, ice and freezing temperatures. It has been rescheduled for Tuesday, 02/04/14.

Membership – Linda Behr was not present due to inclement weather conditions. However, there were 15 members and one guest present.

Vice President – Ray Behr was not present due to inclement weather conditions.

Treasurer's Report – Marie Tsacrios was not present due to inclement weather conditions.

Museum Manager – Al Pribble was not in attendance; he is sick and his wife had surgery last week.

Museum Curator – Fred Plesner reported he mailed brochures to a motel in Bryson City, per their request, as they have had several inquiries regarding the museum.

Education – Diane Aiello said she had nothing scheduled.

Gift Shop – Elena Marsh is ill and was not in attendance.

Gemboree – Norm Holbert stated we have nine vendors signed up already, which is more than we had at the show last year. Marty Martinez inquired as to whether the entire building has been secured for the show and it has been. Arlon said that we are shooting for 15 or 16 vendors and Fred Plesner said that in the past 26 to 28 vendors filled the building.

Old Business – Regarding the very old heater in the museum, Arlon reported he received two bids. The first bid from Corbin McMahan was too high so we will accept the bid from Franklin Sheet Metal. Currently, we are utilizing floor heaters downstairs and the upstairs heater does work and is generating some heat. A question was asked as to whether or not the county commissioners could help us out and Arlon replied that they may be able to help with some of the cost but definitely not all of it.

(cont'd to next page)

(January General Minutes cont'd)

Arlon stated he received a letter and package from a Tennessee resident who had visited the museum and was sad to find no pink marble from Tennessee, so they sent two samples for us to keep. Arlon said pink marble was used in the White House and the Hoover Dam. Fred Plesner will accept the pink marble samples and will write back to these people to thank them.

Arlon mentioned the fact that John Crawford was recently in the newspaper as Citizen of the Year; this gentleman is 94 years old and is a founder and member of our club.

Arlon also reported that gun shows had been canceled due to bad weather so he has had no revenue from table rentals as a result; however, two more are slated in the future, one in Andrews and one in Chattanooga, weather permitting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Dean Plesner was asked to give a prayer following which refreshments were served. Thanks to Arlon Eldridge, the membership was treated to a fascinating film about the Alto Bonito amethyst mine in Brazil. Following the film, questions were entertained and answers provided by Arlon Eldridge and Marty Martinez. In lieu of door prizes, everyone in attendance received a piece of rough amethyst from the mine.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan L. Fritz, secretary

Gift Shop

From Elena Marsh



Now that we're into the new year, I hope that one of your New Year's resolutions was to host at least once a month in the museum! I know Laura will be thrilled when she passes around the monthly hosting calendar at each meeting and it comes back to her with all the dates completely filled with names. Make her wish come true in making that filled sheet a reality. Remember our club can only continue to be as strong as it is with the members that support it! We all need time in our busy lives to 'pay it forward' to our museum!

Although we are only open on Saturdays, traffic in the museum continues to be positive and many folks have also made purchases in the gift shop. Continuous tweaking of displays and items on shelves keeps things interesting in the slow season.

Anamay and I have attempted to diversify some of the areas by make displays eye catching and colorful. Please remember to respect and not change any of the arrangements and displays in the gift shop. We will consider any suggestions about items that could be featured in the gift shop - please give me a call or leave a note in my mailbox.

Stay warm - **Elena Marsh**



**December party picture of bingo gifts and of
Laura Peden.**



From the Museum Manager's Desk

January has been a busy month for me, at the Museum as well as in my personal life. My wife had spinal fusion on Jan. 28th in Asheville, so my presence at the Museum has been limited and will continue to be so for a time. Thanks to Tom Marsh and John Hayes and others for the support they have given in making sure everything keeps running smoothly.

We found that the AC/Heat pump in first floor area had gone out. There was very little heat during the coldest days last month and still is that way. We are using some space heaters to keep the downstairs at a temperature that is bearable for the workers on Saturdays. We hope to get the situation corrected very soon. Also, during the coldest days a water pipe froze. Thankfully, nothing was frozen so solidly that it burst. Tom used some of his equipment and it was thawed out pretty quickly. Then the water was left to run during the rest of the cold spell and everything was fine. We do have more cold weather on the way but I think we will have it under control this time.

We have had a problem with the computer and thanks to Laura & Paul Anderson and myself the problems are being resolved. I have a few more tasks to do before I can be certain everything is fully functional again.

I had planned to hold a class on silver soldering during January, but that had to be postponed. I will be contacting those who indicated an interest in that to let you know when I can reschedule the class. I will have to spread the class over several sessions because of limited space and equipment.

Al Pribble

December party pictures



Program Report**Amethyst of Brazil**

By Rex Larkin

Our January program was presented by Marty Martinez and assisted by our president, Arlon Eldridge. Marty brought about a 15-minute video, interesting in itself, about amethyst mining in Brazil, but our audience found as much satisfaction in the talk afterwards, which added all the local color of Brazil and its miners.

A side note—almost since Arlon's inception as door prize chairman, our door prizes have been much appreciated, and this time was no exception. Every attendee received an excellent sample of amethyst.

I, besides liking amethyst as my birthstone, have been mentoring a young man with gifts from my own collection to spur his interest. I took a sample to his mother the next day—I hated to part with it. Because of the generosity of our members, especially to someone like me, restricted by health, really appreciate it.

The video was filmed by Fernando Masquer, who travels Brazil, not only for amethyst, but also tourmaline, emeralds, etc. Amethyst cave crystals are found in feldspar or kaolin matrix in the Amazon Basin. The jewelry factories in Brazil export most of their product to India and China, evidence of the global prosperity both countries now enjoy.

The particular mine video was in the area of Alto Bonito, and though the samples were beautiful, especially embedded in the walls of the cave shaft, the conditions are horrendous. Equipment is primitive; cave-ins and fatalities are frequent, and the average lifespan of a miner is early forties. They work in shafts 120 meters deep, with humidity and air temperatures approaching 110 degrees. As a consequence, they can stay only a limited time of 3-4 hours. Though a miner makes \$20 a day, he sells what he finds back to the owner to get his salary. A miner will follow a vein as far as possible—some clusters have to be left in place to support the walls. One has no wood beams or other means to support these walls, and sometimes, digging through these veins, one might break into a natural cave.

The miners use a rope basket, as well as steps to descend into the mine. They then send up their samples, where the wives break off sections until only the rich purple of the stone is left. Besides vertical shafts, these miners, thousands of them, will also go into horizontal holes in the mountainside, depending on the richness of the vein. So, although the pay is steady and above the national average, perhaps, the dangers are many.

Member News

Reporting by Linda Behr

Jenna Smith is now an official Air Force "cadet."

Rosie Pribble had back surgery and is now at home *recovering*.

Ray and Linda Behr are finally home. Their last trip was to take their granddaughter on a cruise since she wants to work on a ship. (Sounds good!?)

Elena Marsh as well as Al Pribble have been under the weather.

Tom Marsh had cataract surgery.

Sharon John is still in Georgia taking care of her sister. Her son is "pet" sitting.

Marilyn Kolle is enjoying winter time in Florida visiting with her sons.

Did you see Jacob Sterrett's picture in the Franklin Press representing his school?

Fred and Dean Plesner have adopted a dog named Blondie (spelling?) and in training for the rides in the milk crate and scooter.



Thank you for this good life and forgive us if we do not love it enough. - Garrison Keillor

The Hope Diamond

By Fred Plesner for *The Mountain Gem*

When the "Hope Diamond" was found in a mine on a small tributary of the Coleroon River in southwest India it weighed 112.5 carats and was described as "flat and thin". It was placed in the forehead of a Hindu Idol from whence it was stolen by a Brahmin priest. Somehow it turned up in the hands of Jean Baptiste Tavernier, a French Diamond Trader who smuggled it into France in 1642.

Once purchased by King Louis XIV it was cut "Indian Style" and named "The Blue Diamond of the Crown". While this preserved much of the stones weight and size it also left the stone rather lifeless and without any real fire. To remedy this it was then cut into a heart shape, which trimmed its weight to 67 1/8 carats. In 1792 the stone was stolen and from this point it is guesswork because no one knows for sure if "The Blue Diamond of The Crown" and what is now known as "The Hope Diamond" are in fact the same stone.

A blue diamond whose description matched the "Blue Diamond of The Crown" or as it was sometimes referred to as the "French Blue" turned up in the hands of Wilhelm Fals, a Dutch diamond cutter. Wilhelm Fals recut the stone into an oval which reduced the weight to its present 44 1/2 carats. This reduced the stones weight by 22.625 carats. So what happened to the 22 odd carats that were trimmed from the stone.

Although mystery shrouds the diamonds history there are diamonds that gemologists have from time to time thought to be remnants of the missing piece or pieces. One contender is a six carat stone that was sold in 1874 by the heirs of Karl II, Duke of Brunswick. Another blue diamond of 13.75 carats known as the "Brunswick Blue" came from the same collection. A third and fourth stone have just disappeared. The smaller of these stones which weighed 1.25 carats and the 13.75 carats of the "Brunswick Blue" when added together add up to the weight that one would expect from cleavage loss and re-cutting. Only the 1.25 carat stone and the "Brunswick Blue" have the same depth of color and the same metallic glint that match up with the "Hope Diamond". The evidence is overwhelming that the "Hope Diamond" is a remnant of the blue diamond once owned by King Louis XIV.

The Hope Diamond was measured in 1959 by Dr. George Switzer of the Smithsonian Institution. The stone was found to be 22.0 mm. wide and 26.0 mm. long and 14 mm. deep. The stone has 58 facets and phosphoresces a deep red in ultraviolet light.

Attributes: *Rock and Gem* Sept.-Oct. 1971 (Joel E. Arem)

Humor:

I handed the teller at my bank a withdrawal slip for \$400.00

I said "May I have large bills, please"

She looked at me and said "I'm sorry sir, all the bills are the same size."

When I got up off the floor I explained it to her....

+++++

We recently had a new neighbor call the local township administrative office to request the removal of the DEER CROSSING sign on our road. The reason: 'Too many deer are being hit by cars out here!

I don't think this is a good place for them to be crossing anymore.'



SFMS Workshops

Roy Deere, Education Committee Chair

This is the official start of our 2014 workshop season. The dates for 2014 are:

William Holland June 8-14, Wildacres August 18-24, Wildacres September 22-28, and William Holland October 12-18. These correspond with the same weeks that we had last year.

This year we will have different prices for each location. William Holland decided not to raise their prices this year so the rates will be the same as last year at William Holland. Wildacres decided to raise their prices this year so the rates will be \$15 more than last year.

Information can be found at: <http://www.amfed.org/sfms/>; go to LODESTAR newsletters.



Mobile Stand

More Bench Tips by Brad Smith

A handy mobile stand for your flexshaft can be made easily and quickly from the base of an old swivel office chair. You can find these chairs being thrown out at office buildings and schools. I just ask the custodian in my building to set one aside for me.

To separate the chair from the wheeled base, simply remove the spring clip from the center bottom. I use a small screwdriver or a pair of pliers.

To make the stand, you'll need two pieces of threaded galvanized steel pipe and a pipe fitting from a hardware store. The first length of pipe is 3/4 inch diameter to fit the hole in most chair bases. The second piece is a length of less expensive 1/2 inch pipe. Total length of the two pipes should be five feet. I used a two foot length of 3/4 pipe and a three foot length of 1/2 pipe. They are joined together by a pipe fitting called a 3/4 to 1/2 reducing coupler.

Local Metals Source

Local sheet metal shops typically have barrels of scrap copper, brass and aluminum sheet that they save for recycling. Shops will usually let you go through the barrels to select the shapes and thicknesses you want. Prices vary but will generally be just a little more than the wholesale per-pound scrap value.

I've found it's much cheaper to buy metal this way than ordering from a catalog. There's no shipping charges, and you'll be supporting a local small business in your community. Do remember to bring your thickness gauge and work gloves if you try this.



March Birthdays

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



March Anniversaries

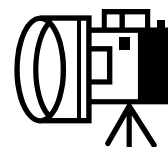
8 – Tom & Diane Aiello
12 – John & Dorothy Crawford
22 – Gary & Charlene Galbrecht
27 – John & Nancy Speer



Have You Heard?

In George Washington's days, there were no cameras. One's image was either sculpted or painted. Some paintings of George Washington showed him standing behind a desk with one arm behind his back while others showed both legs and both arms. Prices charged by painters were not based on how many people were to be painted, but by how many limbs were to be painted. Arms and legs are "limbs" therefore painting them would cost the buyer more. Hence the expression "Okay, but it'll cost you an arm and a leg."

Via Internet



Safety Article- January 2014

Bob Green – Safety Chair

This month being the first of the new year and with the holiday season behind us, we embark on the new year, by going back to earlier topics; preparedness.

As I have stated a number of times, one of my favorite TV shows is Les Stroud's "Survivor man" series. As an opener, I will unequivocally state, I am not a Les Stroud. As I have noted before, I like sleeping in warm dry places in the winter and cool dry places in the summer. I enjoy eating regularly.

Now, we will look at some of the issues related to winter time "opportunities". Our area upstate South Carolina has over the years experienced a number of ice storms. One several years ago resulted in a significant icing event. According to the local power company representative as he was checking our lines to verify continuity (in other words, no breaks) stated that one reason they were so unprepared was the expectation was up to 1/8". Well as all good things that can go awry, this did. Some of the areas, east of us had up to 1" of ice.

Our power was restored in about 48 hours, because we were on the northwest part of the storm. Our son, who lived downtown waited 6 days before his power was restored. The one good thing was the temperature did not fall out. In 1988, we had an unusually large snow, about a foot, the temperature plunged to mid teens for several days. The result was a lot of stalled vehicles on the local interstate and many irate folks. The storm hit our area on a Friday.

I was a participant at a client presentation and our office closed at 2:00 PM of Friday. My wife worked close by and her office manager dropped her off at my office. When we left about 4:00 and we lived about 7 miles away, we saw about 5 other cars on the road. At this time there was about 8 inches of snow on the ground. We had a Dodge Colt at the time, so when we pulled into our drive-way we slid on top of the snow, but we were off the street. Now, why this story? At the time we had two (2) cats, one of whom required clean litter once a week or more frequent. We were out of litter, so on Saturday morning; I walked about a mile (one way) to the local convenience store to get kitty litter! I did fall in the middle of the street one time, but made it back.

Since then we are more prepared. We now live out of the city and when we bought our present house, I noted that the previous owner likewise collected oil lamps. Well, within a year, we found that he was not a collector, like me, but these were a necessity.

Therefore, back to the subject of being prepared. We now carry warm clothes, a sleeping bag, water and some packaged food in our cars. We also carry a long handled camp axe in our vehicles. I started this about 50 years ago. I grew up in western North Carolina and spent a lot of time off the major roads, because I liked to hike in the off the beaten path. Twice in those years, I came upon folks that were also off the beaten path that had the misfortune to be trapped by a fallen tree across the dirt road leading into and out of these paths. Using the long handled camp axe, several of the limbs were removed to permit the trapped folks to escape.

When the wife and I were fortunate to be assigned to a project in southern Germany several years back, we met several local families and became hiking companions. The families were always prepared for the hikes and we followed their lead in this regard. This usually meant with more substantial rations than what we were used to for a hike. We learned that this was the only way to really enjoy your hike. And on several occasions we ended up being on the trail much longer than we planned and as such this preparation was greatly appreciated. So, evaluate your situation and your activities and consider what you may have to contend with and, be prepared.



Instructor John Hayes
with
club members.



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 - Copyright © All rights reserved.

DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee

An Official Field Trip of the Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society (HOST)

An Official Field Trip of The Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin, NC Inc.

9:00 AM TO 3:00PM(CST)

Saturday, March 29 , 2014

Sugar Creek near Millington, TN

Where: Sugar Creek near Millington, TN

Assembly Time: 9:00 am (CST) Popeye's is located in front of Walmart at 8845 U.S. 51, Millington, TN. Corner street is Wilkersville Blvd.

Sugar Creek is located about 20 miles north of Memphis, TN and 10 miles north of Millington. We will assemble and depart Popeye's parking lot at 9 am Central Standard Time. We will caravan to the collecting site. There are multiple motels located on Highway 51 in Millington. Majority within one mile of meeting place.

Collecting: This will be the DMC first trip to Sugar Creek. The creek begins at the Mississippi River and meanders around 5-6 miles through West Tennessee loess hills. Along the creek are multiple gravel bars. Primary collecting will be at these gravel bars. Material will be agate, jasper, chert in multiple colors and banding, fossil chert and petrified wood. Rare finds include Lake Superior Agates, Ice Age fossils such as horse and bison, and mastodon has also been found in area. Material is excellent for tumbling and lapidary work,

Collecting Conditions/ Tools: Creek collecting. You must wade (get wet) in order to access many of the gravel bars. Recommend boots or water proof shoes or a change of shoes/socks. No digging required. Recommend walking stick. Stick with a metal point is good for checking for petrified wood as it will sound like glass when poked. Also recommend backpack, fanny packs and/or plastic buckets although five gallon buckets can be cumbersome in creek collecting. Children are ok. However, they must be supervised and in direct contact/site of an adult at all times.

Weather - Weather in late March is unpredictable and may vary. Be prepared. If there is adverse conditions. The host club will make every effort to inform attendees. Check club site www.memphisgeology.org for updates.

IMPORTANT NOTE. If heavy rains make the creek inaccessible or unsafe for collecting we will move the collecting trip to the Memphis Stone and Gravel pit which is near Millington. It will not change or alter the meeting time or location

Special note: The host club, The Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society. will provide drinks, snacks, dry socks and special awards/prizes for your creek finds.

Directions: Traveling west I-40 from Nashville

- a.. Take TN-385/TN-205 exit, EXIT 24-25, toward Millington/Arlington/Collierville
- b.. Take Exit 24 toward Millington 17 miles to Highway 51
- c.. Merge -51 N/US-51 N/TN-3 N toward Millington
- d.. Travel 3.6 miles to Popeye's is on the left

Traveling north I-55 from Mississippi

- a.. Travel north on I-55
- b.. Follow directions to 240 north
- c.. Take exit 2A on the left toward US-51/Millington.
- d.. Travel 15 miles to Popeye's is on left

Field trip leaders Charles Hill 901-626 4232, WC McDaniel 901 490-3575. w.c.mcd@att.net.



THE MOUNTAIN GEM

Linda Behr, Editor

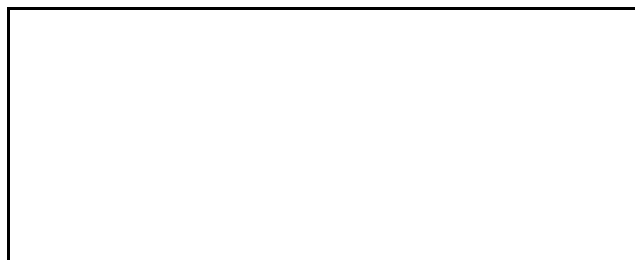
25 Phillips Street

Franklin, NC 28734



First Class Mail

Join us for February's
program
on
Brazilian Emeralds.



Month	Board Meeting	General
February	25	27
March	25	27
April	22	24
May	27	29
June	24	26
July	15	17
August	26	28
September	23	25 Banquet
October	28	30
November	18	20
December	9	13 end of Year party

Monthly General Meetings: 6:30 p.m. the last Thursday of the month in the 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.