

CRACK 'N CAB

Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY
Volume 45 Issue 10 November 2015



In This Issue

President's Message	2
Secretary's Report	2
Events & Trips	4-5
All that Glitters...	5
November's Birthstone	7
Junior Rockhounds	7



GMSS General Meeting Presenter - Len Sharp 3 of the Biggest US Earthquakes

You know some things about the San Francisco Earthquake. Len will talk about it and 2 more of the biggest ones that happened in the US. His talk will also include great historical perspective and background information.

Nov 16, 2015
7:30 to 09:00 PM
Shoppingtown Clubhouse

Note: That's Len next to a very BIG and interesting rock! You may want to go to the CNY Skeptics Meeting, November 18, 7-9 PM when Len will present "The Puzzling Moai of Rapa Nui (Easter Island)" See <http://www.syracusenewtimes.com/calendar/event/november-2015-cny-skeptics-meeting/>

**It's
membership
renewal
time again!**

**You can pay at
any meeting or
Mail to:GMSS
PO Box 2801
Syracuse
NY 13220**



Donna Coleman won a malachite specimen at the GemWorld volunteer appreciation drawing.



Cathy Patterson and her writing award from EFMLS

**You're How Old?
GMSS is 63
GemWorld is 50
and
The Crack 'N Cab
Newsletter is 45
Stand by for
GemWorld
Golden
Anniversary
Celebration News**



Rick Moore talks about field testing kits

Contact our Editor at editorgmss@gmail.com to submit questions, corrections, requests, news, pictures and suggestions.

President's Message



John Sweeney - President

November 2015

Ho! Ho! Ho! Hey wait a minute we're a little early for that, but not really. Before our next newsletter December's reaches your inbox or is posed in your mailbox along with various seasonal materials, we will be sitting down for the Club's annual holiday soiree. This year, it is scheduled to be at the Traditions at the Links restaurant in Fayetteville on December 6th. Details for signing up are inside. Don't forget to bring an unwrapped toy as a donation for the Toys for Tots campaign.

Come feel the earth move under your feet as Len Sharp, club member, nationally recognized science teacher and speaker presents a talk on some of the world's largest earthquakes. Get there early and strap yourself in. Len's talks are always informative and engaging.

Our kids' group, the Junior Rock Hounds, is meeting on the third Saturdays of the month and Lapidary classes are being held on Wednesdays. To sign up for the Junior Rock Hounds contact Shannon Phillips at kidsrock@gmss.us. Or to sign up for the next series of Lapidary classes starting in January contact John Sweeney at Pres@gmss.us. There are open shop hours at the club on Tuesdays. Contact Cheryl Brown at secretary@gmss.us

It seems hard to believe with temperatures in the seventies this week that we are in November and that Thanksgiving is right around the corner. Here at the Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse we have a lot to be thankful for. We have a long history of engaged members. We have a growing membership, in times when many clubs are faltering. We have award winning editors and writers in our newsletter. We have some really good cooks which I am reminded of every time I walk away from our picnic. And the thing I am most thankful for is that we have a lot of really good people who are members of this club. I have worked alongside many club members over the years and been impressed with members' work ethics, common sense, practical and artistic visions, as well as, their friendliness and acceptance of others. I think we really have the

society part of gem and mineral society down. Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Secretary's Report



Cheryl Brown - Secretary Meeting Minutes

General Meeting Minutes October 19, 2015

Rick Moore gave an interesting and informative talk about identifying minerals. He started by stating knowing what specimens are in a location is the key to having a successful search. He identified three online resources:

- Mindat – www.mindat.org
- Mineral and Gemstone Kingdom – www.minerals.net/mineralmain.aspx
- Web Mineralogy Database – www.webmineral.com

Since Rick had an extensive library with him, he said he would provide a recommended booklist. Thanks!

Rick then defined terms generally used to describe minerals including color, luster, diaphaneity, shape, hardness, tenacity, fracture and cleavage.

Rick went on to describe what he includes in a field mineral collecting kit, as well as items which can be used to determine hardness. He cautioned doing a scratch test on a good specimen – scratches are permanent.

Mineral Collecting Kit	
Hardness	Tool
1	#1 pencil (graphite)
1.5	#2 pencil (graphite)
2	Zinc penny (after 1982)
2.5	Fingernail
3	Calcite
3.5	Copper penny (all years pre-1982)
5.5	Glass microscope slide, knife blade (carbon steel), large steel construction nail with sharpened tip
6.5	Steel file – small set that can be found at Real Deal or Dollar Store
	Small jars or film canisters or

	prescription bottles to hold small specimens
	Band-Aids
	Magnifying glass
	Small magnet
	Fancy peach wrappers or tool drawer liner for wrapping specimens
	Notebook
	Streak plates (unfinished porcelain plates or backside of ceramic wall tiles)

The presentation ended with Rick challenging us to ID two specimens using the information he gave. Galena and graphite were the mystery specimens.

Several awards were given out. Cathy Patterson was informed she received a 6th place EFMLS Editor's Award. Congratulations, Cathy! Donna Coleman's name was drawn to receive the Gem World Show worker appreciation award.

In last month's Crack and Cab, it was reported that the Board approved an amendment to the Constitution regarding the duties of the Membership Chair. The amendment was presented to the membership at the October meeting. It will be voted on at the November meeting. The proposed amendment is as follows: The current Constitution states:

Article VIII - Committees

Section 13. The Membership Committee

A. shall be composed of as many members as deemed necessary and selected by its Chairman, who will be named by the President from a candidate (s) list submitted by the Executive Committee; and

B. shall have the duty and responsibility to establish a program to meet the Society's membership objectives.

The proposed changes are:

Section 13. The Membership Committee

A. shall be composed of as many members as deemed necessary and selected by its Chairman, who will be named by the President from a candidate(s) list submitted by the Executive Committee; and

B. shall have the duty and responsibility to establish a program to meet the Society's membership objectives, and

C. shall receive all applications for membership in the Gem and Mineral Society, and

D. shall collect and record dues, and

E. shall forward membership payments to the Gem and Mineral Society Treasurer, and
 F. shall distribute membership cards, and
 G. shall maintain all membership records, both past and present, and
 H. shall provide membership information requested by others on the Board of Directors.

The Hospitality Committee has a new Chairperson! Thank you to Judy and Harold Jones who volunteered. Judy, Sharon Thomson and Brielle Dailey volunteered to bring the snack for the next meeting.

The Audit Committee comprised of Linda Sweeney-Clark, Cathy Patterson, John Davis and Cheryl Brown met to go over the treasurer's books. John Davis reported that the committee found them to be in good order and accurate.

The Albany Museum Gem and Mineral show will be February 13 and 14, 2016. This will include a tour of the museum, which features New York State rocks. Mark your calendars.

Linda Sweeney-Clark reported she is collecting money from vendors for the 2016 Gem World show.

Dick Lyons has been tasked with finding a gold dealer for our 50th anniversary 2016 Gem World show. The only dealer he knows about is in California and they are very expensive. He asks if anyone knows of other gold vendors, please contact him with the information.

Respectfully Submitted,
 Cheryl Brown

**Board Meeting Minutes
 November 3, 2015**

We are still looking for a new clubhouse space. If you have any suggestions, please forward them to John Sweeney.

Mark Grasmeyer reported that a bus will be hired to go to the Albany Gem and Mineral show on February 13, 2016. The cost will be \$35.00 per person and the admission to the show is \$5.00. The bus will leave at 8am from the Shoppingtown parking lot behind Helping Hounds. There will be a sign-up sheet and you must pay the bus fee in advance.

The Holiday Party will be Sunday December 6 11AM-2 PM at Traditions At the Links 5900 N Burdick St, East Syracuse.

Dick Lyons reported that he is still looking for wholesale dealers since Village Silversmith will not be with us next year.

Shannon Phillips has launched the Kids Rock youth group. Their first meeting on October 31st was a huge success. The next meeting will be November 21st from 10am to 1pm at the Clubhouse. Contact her at kidsrock@gmss.us if you have any questions.

Thank you to Judy and Harold Jones for volunteering to be our Hospitality Committee Chairs. They will be contacting those who indicated they were interested in helping out. We need someone to take charge of decorating the front window. This will involve advertising the monthly meeting and setting up a display that reflects the meeting topic. Please contact John Sweeney if you are interested.

Have you 'liked' our Facebook page yet? Rick Moore is updating it for Mineral Monday and Brielle Dailey is updating it on Fabulous Friday. This is a great way to get the word out about our club.

There will be a sale at the clubhouse on Saturday, November 14th from 12 to 4, put on by Rick Moore. He is selling rocks and minerals from his father's collection as well as used equipment. Come check it out.

Len Sharp, a retired earth science teacher, will be the speaker at the November 16th meeting. He will talk about three of the largest earthquakes to hit the US.

Respectfully Submitted,

JoAnne Suchon sitting in for Cheryl Brown who was an election poll worker

Club Events and Field Trips

Field Trip suggestions are encouraged. For specific information and travel arrangements, meeting times and car pool locations, contact Mark Grasmeyer text or voice 317-1350 or get info at any Club Meeting. Trip details are subject to change, so it is best to reserve a spot with Mark before the event.

Current Club and General Rock-Mineral-Fossil-Lapidary Events see updated events list at <http://gmss.us/events>

Saturday November 14 12-4PM Shoppingtown Clubhouse Contact - Rick Moore *Sale of raw material, made items and equipment.*

20% of proceeds go to club for Jr. Rockhounds and other outreach activities.

For Sale <Mexican minerals, cabochons, Heishi beads, geodes (cut polished cracked), Brazilian Agate nodules, agate and jasper slabs, made necklaces, sterling silver rings, earrings, two 8" Lortone rock saws (no motor), 6" Lortone rock saw (motor works), two 8" Lortone lap combos w/ tool guide, 220 grid carbide wheel, 3" sanding wheel and side facing flat polishing wheel (no motor) and more>

Saturday November 21 Junior Rockhounds Meeting 10-1PM

We will focus on rocks and minerals, with activities including making a mineral identification kit, studying crystal shapes, exploring ways to build a mineral collection, growing crystals and making geodes, and more! Please join us for these hands-on activities, which will result in earning the AFMS Rocks and Minerals badge.

Monday December 1 7-8:30 PM GMSS Board Meeting at Little Gem Diner, 832 Spencer St, Syracuse

Sunday December 6 11AM-2 PM GMSS Holiday Party at Traditions At the Links 5900 N Burdick St, East Syracuse

Entertainment by John Wilson. Bring a new unwrapped toy to give Toys for Tots - see <http://syracuse-ny.toysfortots.org/> Anyone wanting to mail in reservations for the Holiday Party, Should send a check to GMSS Treasurer, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY 13220. There will be someone at the next meeting to take checks or cash for the party. Price per member is \$15.00. Non members \$22.00. (Spouses and guests who are not members.) Children 10 and under \$7.00.

Tuesday January 5 7-8:30 PM GMSS Board Meeting at Little Gem Diner, 832 Spencer St, Syracuse

Monday January 18 7:30-9PM GMSS Group Meeting - TBA Shoppingtown Clubhouse

Saturday February 13 The 23rd Annual James Campbell Memorial Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show and Sale; Empire Plaza, Albany; Sat. 10AM-5PM

Bus departs Shoppingtown (behind Helping Hounds Dog Rescue) **8AM (don't be late)** - return 10PM - BUS FEE \$35 per person - for reservation text/phone Mark Grasmeyer at 317-1350 note: Event Admission \$5 (cash)

string that the beads come on. While there's nothing wrong with buying and using dyed material, the buyer should be aware of what he or she is actually purchasing.

Heat treating is another common way that semi-precious stones and gemstones are altered, often without the knowledge of the buyer. Heat treating is commonly used to enhance the natural color of stones like aquamarine, amethyst, and ruby. Quartz can be turned a variety of colors by heating and cooling it under the right conditions. Green amethyst is created by heat treating certain varieties of purple amethyst, as is citrine, which I mentioned before. Another type of heat treatment is the hydrothermal method, which involves placing pieces of quartz in a pressure-sealed container in a solution of sodium carbonate or hydroxyl, which causes the pieces of quartz to melt and recrystallize upon heating producing unnaturally vivid colors. I find it fascinating that by reproducing one of the common elements of rock building, heat, people can manipulate nature to enhance and imitate what it produces on its own.

For a while, I was in love with London Blue topaz. Its rich, dark, almost velvety color is quite alluring. This color, however, is not found in nature. Natural blue topaz is incredibly rare, which increases the demand for blue topaz colored by irradiation. Clear topaz is exposed to radiation, producing the popular colors of London Blue, Swiss Blue, and Sky Blue Topaz. Glacier Blue and Arctic Blue are two other shades of blue topaz that have appeared on the market over the last century. This stone is so popular that blue topaz is the modern birthstone for December, despite the fact that nearly all blue topaz on the market began as clear topaz.

Surface treatments involving applying thin layers of metal to the outside of crystals creates other variations of topaz, include Mystic Fire topaz, which is treated with titanium to produce strong green and purple iridescence. The popular "aura" quartzes, including Aqua Aura, Rainbow Aura, and Angel Aura quartz come in a variety of colors and possess the aurora borealis effect that I usually associate with Swarovski crystals.

Physical alterations, sometimes involving chemical processes and sometimes not, are also used to enhance and alter stones. One particularly insidious example is the composite rubies that began appearing on the American market in 2008. These stones are assembled from multiple pieces

of low-grade corundum fused together with colored glass. While heat treatment and filling small imperfections has been a long-accepted practice in the ruby market, selling composite stones, with very little real value, as gem quality rubies is reprehensible. Another technique that can take in uninformed buyers is opal doublets or triplets. In doublets, a thin layer of good quality opal is glued on to backing to create the appearance of a solid opal. Triplets are paper-thin slices of opal adhered to a backing and capped with a clear quartz, glass, or plastic dome. Because gem-quality opal is relatively rare and expensive, these doublets or triplets are widely available. Sapphire is another stone that is sometimes set as a doublet where low quality sapphire is placed on top of a color-enhancing material. There is no doubt that beautiful jewelry is made using these methods. However, if customers are not informed, they may not be getting the quality stone they are paying for.

Lab grown stones are becoming more widely available as technology improves. While we have yet to create a perfect replica of a diamond, sapphires can be synthetically grown with such perfection that the only way to tell them from specimens found in nature is by examining the crystalline structure with a jeweler's loupe. Synthetic stones are not identical to those found in nature, but they have the same chemical composition and are often quite difficult to differentiate from their naturally grown counterparts. For mineral collectors, lab grown specimens can cause a bit of confusion, too. Recently there have been reports of unusual formations of certain minerals appearing on the market. Some of these formations have been lab grown (chalcanthite, for example, is a natural by-product of copper mining whose crystals appear infrequently in nature, but are easy to grow in a lab) and others are simply composites with pieces glued together to create unusual and interesting specimens that can easily dupe an imprudent buyer. Buying from established dealers, asking detailed questions, and examining pieces very closely are all ways to avoid falling victim to unscrupulous sellers.

While it's disappointing to learn that these practices, some openly acknowledged and others deliberately hidden, we have the advantage of a large group of experts in the club to help us with our jewelry and display purchases. Knowledge is the best way to be sure you're getting what you're paying for, so do your homework. You can

send questions about minerals to minerals@gmss.us and questions about gems and semi-precious stones to lapidary@gmss.us.

Bibliography

Blessing, M., & Hogsett, J. (2008). *Create Jewelry: Stones*. Ft. Collins, CO: Interweave Publishing.

Friedman, H. (1997-2015) The gemstone quartz. Retrieved November 1, 2015.

Pu, T. (2015). Fake Crystals, Minerals, Gemstones, Lapidary and Fossils Guide. Retrieved November 1, 2015.

Schlegel, D. (1949). Gemstones of the United States. *Geological Survey Bulletin, 1042(G)*. Retrieved November 1, 2015.

Stein, I. (2015). Opal Doublets and Triplets. Retrieved November 2, 2015.

Wouters, J. (2010, July 16). A surge of altered rubies flooding gemstone market. Retrieved November 1, 2015.

November's Birthstone: Citrine
by Benjamin Wilbur, age 10

Citrine is a mineral that is brown and orange and is a birthstone for November. It can be made into jewelry, like necklaces, rings and more. "What is its hardness level?" you may ask. Its hardness level is 7 because it's made out of quartz crystals.

Citrine is the most popular gem after amethyst and where can it be found is in Colombia Madagascar, Spain, USA and France. Brazil is the leading supplier.

I think that citrine is ugly, but it's my birthstone so what can I say.



.....
Junior Rockhounds
from Shannon Phillips
.....

The mission of our Jr Rockhounds group is to foster friendships and a love of learning about geology, minerals, and fossils. To that end, GMSS is a member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies' Future Rockhounds of America program. One of the program's highlights is the AFMS/FRA Merit Badge Program, which promotes rewards-based education in Earth Science and "rockhound skill" development. When all 20 merit badges have been completed, a child will be listed on the AFMS/FRA Rock Stars page along with other "Rock Stars" from around the country.

Typical meetings of the GMSS group will consist of three parts: Introductions/icebreakers/membership activity; Brief lesson about the month's badge requirements; and interactive learning stations with fun, engaging activities designed to fulfill the badge requirements. Activities are appropriate for school-aged children.

Members who cannot attend may request instructions for activities necessary to complete the monthly badge, which can be submitted to the club leaders at a subsequent meeting.

The group typically meets on the third Saturday of each month, except July and December.

If you have questions about Junior Rockhounds, you may contact the team at KidsRock@gmss.us



The October meeting of the Junior Rockhounds was held on October 31. Two boys attended to learn about Earth Processes and complete activities toward the AFMS Earth Process badge. We explored the rock cycle, learned about the differences among rock types, made volcanoes, created our own "fossils," studied sedimentation through sand art, made conglomerates out of cookie dough and candy, and created solutions to grow our own crystals. The boys took home samples of sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rocks for their collections.



Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse

P.O. Box 2801

Syracuse, New York 13220

First Class Mail

November 2015

Time Dated Material



Crack 'N Cab
Newsletter of Gem & Mineral Society
Syracuse, NY

www.amfed.org

www.amfed.org/efms

scribe.rbnet.net

Eight people organized the Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse in 1951. Since that time it has grown in membership to include adults, families, and young folk. The Society was incorporated in 1969 under the same name.

The objectives of the Society are to stimulate interest in mineralogy, paleontology, and the lapidary arts. Member interests include collecting, identification, and display of minerals, gems, fossils. Members share and develop their artistic skills in jewelry design and creation.

Our monthly meetings provide social and educational experiences. Field trips give collectors chances to find specimens and enjoy the of outdoors, exercise and time with old and new friends.

We meet on the third Monday of the month (NOT in July, August, December) at 7:30 PM in the Clubhouse (Shoppingtown Mall on the 2nd floor near Sears).

Visitors are ALWAYS welcome

Annual member dues:

Adult \$10 • Family/Couple \$15 • Junior \$5 • Life \$5

If you would like to join or renew your membership, download the application form (PDF) [click here](#) or get a form at a meeting or send to the address at the top of this page and we will mail a membership form/card to you.

Club Officers 2015-2016

-President

John Sweeney 668-8470 pres@gmss.us

-Vice-President

Mark Grasmeyer 317-1350 vp@gmss.us

-Treasurer

Linda Sweeney Clark 668-8470 treasurer@gmss.us

-Secretary & Membership Contact

Cheryl Brown 487-6009 secretary@gmss.us

-Sergeant-at-Arms

Ed Suchon 672-3904 sgtatarms@gmss.us

-Show Chair GemWorld 2016

Dick Lyons 672-5328 show@gmss.us

-Librarian

Steve Albro 607-756-2298 library@gmss.us

-Sunshine

Cathy Patterson 480-8907 sunshine@gmss.us

-Webmaster

Rick Moore 834-7442 webmaster@gmss.us

-Crack 'N Cab Editor

Dan Andrianos 492-6437 editorgmss@gmail.com

-Photographers Extraordinaire

Judy Cook and Sharon Thomson

-Hospitality Committee - Judy and Harold Jones