

THE HOUND'S HOWL

AIKEN GEM, MINERAL and FOSSIL SOCIETY
AIKEN, SOUTH CAROLINA



VOLUME 56, No.3

MARCH 2018

From the Prez...

It seems that I am Club president again, after a two-year vacation. To fill in for Shellie is virtually impossible; she was the life of the Club with her many contributions in so many areas. No one person will be able to fill her shoes, but I hope that if we pull together, we as a group will be able to continue the good work and achievements that she accomplished.

A successful Show and S.E.E.D. were high on Shellie's agenda and stoked her creative juices. Those of you who are likewise talented consider giving of your time and efforts to volunteer for our Club's biggest commitments.

For the Show, setup begins Thursday, March 8 at 9 a.m. as soon as the Julian Smith Casino opens. The goal: to have tables set according to the floor plan and cases on the stands before noon when the dealers arrive. Come prepared with screw driver (powered, if possible). Folks will be putting in their exhibits on Thursday until after the dealer dinner winds down. Some of the demonstrators will also be setting up then or Friday morning. Sunday take-down starts at 5pm (for some reason, it always seems to go more quickly than set-up). But unloading and loading the trailer is no cinch; men are needed here!

Remember that our regular meeting night is pushed ahead a week because of the Show. I hope to see you on **Friday, March 16** at 7 PM. Bring your memories and purchases for Show 'n Tell.

Walt Kubilius

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March 16 Program

Mining for Gems
by Amos Cunningham, owner of
Cunningham Farm, Due West, S.C.

Looking for amethyst, beryl, smoky quartz or
aquamarine?

Amos will tell us the history of his mine
and how to follow the signs to crystal discovery.



April 13 Program

My Life – A Mineral Gallery
by Carol Jantzen



Welcome New Members

Charles and Suzanne Lowe
Noah and Christian Hartley
Graniteville, S.C.

- 3 – James Gee
- 3 – Barbara Schmidt
- 5 – Deby Stewart
- 8 – Linda Kolma
- 11 – Ted Dziekanowski
- 13 – Sue Shrader
- 14 – Mark Pitts
- 18 – Vickie Newell
- 19 – Alessa Hovey
- 20 – Gary Hert
- 23 – Melina Stewart
- 25 – Dennis Scherer
- 31 – David Dunlap





It is with sadness and compassion that we learned of the passing of Melanie Lipsky on Saturday, February 24, 2018.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Jerry and Sally and their family.

In memory of their daughter, donations may be made to the Key Deer Protection Alliance at <http://keydeer.org> or the National Wildlife Federation at <https://www.nwf.org>.

Meeting Minutes

The February 9 meeting of the Aiken Gem Mineral and Fossil Society was called to order by V.P. **Debra Baer** at 7pm. There were 21 attendees.

Debra told the members that **Walt Kubilius** had agreed to fill the open position of president, brought about by the death of Shellie Newell. A vote was held; Walt was voted president and led the meeting from that point on. Members were asked to express their memories of Shellie.

Debra gave the vice president report and listed the programs for the remainder of 2018.

Treasurer **Kathleen Wallis** gave the treasurer's report.

John Kolmar, field trip committee chair, reported on the field trips available through the end of April.

Show chairman **Chris Glass** gave a show report detailing the need of help for setup/take down, treasure dig, and dealer dinner. Sign up sheets were available for volunteers. 50 cents-off coupons were handed out. The last Bag and Tag will be held at Jerry and Sally Lipsky's home on March 4 at 1pm.

Walt explained the need for a new person to assume the Secretary position. **Sharon Sterrett** volunteered with **Jim Sproull** as backup in case Sharon cannot make a meeting.

Walt distributed BEAC Awards given for newsletter articles appearing in the *Hound's Howl* in 2016.

Show 'n Tell was presented by **Christian DuPont**, **Mike Potvin** and Debra Baer. Christian had some marine fossils in limestone from Brooksville, FL and several Mesozoic Gryphaea oyster fossils from Normandy, France. Mike showed a pyrite sun that he purchased at the Columbia Gem and Mineral Show. Debra Baer brought a possible Indian artifact that she hoped to have authenticated.

Refreshments were provided by Sharon Sterrett, **Dave Dunlap** and **Sally and Jerry Lipsky**.

The program for the evening was Rockhound Trivia prepared by Jim Sproull and **Margaret Marion** and presented by Jim. The winners were Walt Kubilius, Dave Dunlap, and **Kelly Hovey**. Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Wallis, Acting Secretary



February Show 'n Tell

A **pyrite sun** 3.5x3 inches with a double center was a special treat to see for we don't have many of these in our collections. Mike Potvin purchased it at the Columbia GMS Show last November and appreciated its peculiarities.



A flat pyrite specimen with rays like the sun is unique for we are more familiar with the cubic form. Research reveals it formed over 350 mya and is found, almost exclusively, in southern Illinois

(Randolph County) coal mines. As the pyrite crystallizes, it is compressed between sheets of anthracite coal shale and so the fanned structure is formed. The suns are found at the 300-ft. level where a narrow seam lays on top of the coal vein.

Almost all of the mines have closed due to EPA regulations and many of the suns for sale are from miners' stashes as they were collected in quantity at one time.

To keep a specimen in good shape for as long as possible, and not disintegrate by "Pyrite Disease," it must be kept in a dry environment, not handled and away from other minerals. Even then, deterioration is almost inevitable since those from the shale have some alteration due to presence of marcasite. This iron disulfide with tabular crystals reacts with moisture and oxygen, the sulfur forms sulfuric acid and hastens the



process. How many of us have seen a pyrite stored in a shed that has become a gray powder with the paper label barely intact?

To make the suns more attractive and therefore more expensive, dealers now are heat treating and chemically altering them to appear iridescent which only hastens the deterioration process.

Photo by Mike Potvin.

References: www.spiritrockshop.com and www.twoguysfossils2.com

A **handsome stone tomahawk** almost 2 feet long was brought by Debbie Baer. It is from Oregon and Chris Moore said it is not ancient; the head appears to have been notched with metal tools. But it is well used



Photo by Debra Baer

and has authentic detailing in the leather handle covering and the bead work. It may have been used for demonstrations of native dances or ceremonies for tourists.



SRARP Tour

By John Kolmar, Field Trip Chair

On February 16, nine club members traveled to the Savannah River Site to tour the Savannah River Archaeological Research Program (SRARP), a division of the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina.

This program was started in 1973 in response to federal laws passed in the late 1960s (National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 & National Environmental Policy act of 1969) which required protection of America's Cultural heritage. SRARP since then has been doing a large number of archaeological surveys of the Savannah River Site including the sites of the towns that were obliterated by the construction of the nuclear facility in the early 1950s. These towns included Ellenton, Dunbarton, and Meyers Mill.

However, SRARP has expanded its work to include studying archaeological sites even older than these towns. Led by Dr. Christopher Moore, the group visited the site of a church that was built in 1810. Studies of the area have shown that the original church was burned down and then rebuilt approximately 200

yards away. Now, all that is left are the remnants of an old cemetery and an unused crypt. Different colored flags marked the site and demonstrated that the SRARP staff is still busy studying this site (in fact, a bullet from the Civil War was recently found there).

Dr. Moore displayed and identified several Indian artifacts that the staff collected recently. Most of these are from the Woodlands to Clovis periods and are 18,000 years old. He also showed projectiles that were recently sent to Calgary, Canada for analysis of blood residue to determine what animals were roaming the area at that time. Such analysis has shown that elephants, bison, turkeys, and rabbits were present. He told us that blood residue from a saber-toothed tiger was recently found on a projectile from the Summerville, SC area.

In addition, we learned about the team's study of microminerals found via the separation of sand layers that a huge impact (meteor?) occurred in the area between 14,000 to 18,000 years ago.

And work is ongoing converting the paper documentation and evidence collected over the years to computer files thus making them easier to study and ensuring their preservation for future generations.

It was a very informative trip that opened our eyes to how much has occurred in the area over the eons of time.



Bulletin Editors Awards 2017

Congratulations to our members who received recognition in last year's Contest.

Original Adult Articles Advanced

Jerry Lipsky
SFMS First Place and AFMS 6th Place
"Molluscs (Part 3): Cephalopods"
The Hound's Howl, June 2016

Shellie Newell
SFMS 2nd Place and AFMS Honorable Mention
"Sticking a Neck Out: Titanosaurus Debuts at the American Museum of Natural History"
The Hound's Howl, February 2016

Original Adult Articles

John Kolmar
SFMS 3rd Place and AFMS 7th Place
"Field Trip Report: Graves Mountain"
The Hound's Howl, May 2016



Written Features

Chris Glass
 SFMS 10th Place
 "South Carolina State Stone: Blue Granite"
The Hound's Howl, January 2016

Michael Potvin
 SFMS Honorable Mention
 "The Eyes of a King"
The Hound's Howl, October 2016

Jim Stoops
 SFMS Honorable Mention
 "Magnificent Micromounts"
The Hound's Howl, February 2016



Finishing the Grab Bags!!

Twelve members met on March 4 and made fast work of filling over 1300 grab bags with 7 to 8 bagged and tagged minerals and fossils.



Thanks to Chris Glass, Don Horne, Nancy and Mark Pitts, Jim Gee, Dede Biles, Adela Dziekanowski, Dave Dunlap, Sharon Sterrett, Jim Sproull, Kelly Hovey and Debra Baer for a successful afternoon.



Mark and Kelly filling bags.

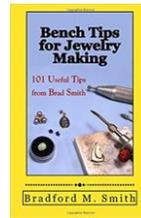


Don doing the stapling.
 Photos by Debra Baer

2018 Federation Workshops

SFMS William HollandJune 10-16
 WildacresAugust 20-26
 WildacresSeptember 17-23
 Registration forms/class list:
www.amfed.org/sfmsworkshops.com

EFMLS Wildacres.....May 21-27
 WildacresSeptember 3-9
www.amfed.org/efmls-wildacres.org



More Bench Tips

by Brad Smith
<https://www.facebook.com/BenchTips/>

RISKS of NATURAL GAS

Some jewelers in the USA are tapping in to the natural gas system in their homes to fuel their torch. Two students have asked me if this was safe. Because I'm not an expert in torch gas systems I called the engineering department of Smith Equipment Company and tech support at Rio Grande. Both told me it was not safe to use natural gas available in US homes. (NOTE: This applies to the USA only. I know nothing about the gas used in other countries.)

The problem concerns a thing called a flashback arrestor that isolates your torch from the sources of oxygen and fuel gas. The people at both Smith (605 882-3200) and Rio (800 545-6566) explained that home natural gas comes in at too low a pressure for the flashback arrestor to function correctly. This means that a problem at the torch could propagate a fire back through the fuel hose and into your home's gas pipe system. And that can't be good.

Natural gas pressure in a US home is typically about one-quarter of one pound per square inch, very low. Flashback arrestors require at least two pounds per square inch to work properly. Special equipment is available to solve the problem, but it is quite expensive.

So it's best to use bottled fuel gas through a regulator and flashback arrestor.

My jewelry bench is inside my home, not in a garage or a separate shop building, so I'm obviously concerned that the operation is safe. On the advice of a local fire marshal, I do not use a refillable fuel gas tank. He said it contains too much gas in case of a leak and would be a problem with my home insurance. So my choice of fuel gas is to use propane in 14 ounce disposable cylinders. I use it with a refillable oxygen tank that, like medical oxygen, is quite safe in the house.



Daylight Saving Time Begins at 2am, March 11, which means turning your clocks forward an hour when you go to bed Saturday night, March 10.

Rock 'n Read

How many rockhounds are familiar with the Spruce Pine, N. Carolina mines and dig sites, jewelry and craft shops, and tourist stops? I would venture to say that most of our members have visited there or, at least, are familiar with the area.

"The Mineral City: Exploring the Spruce Pine Mining District" by Bryan Mims is an informative and entertaining read about the history (geologic and economic) and some of the old-timers who mined the abundant mica and feldspar.

<https://www.ourstate.com/mineral-city/> Our State, first published in 1933, features stories about North Carolina's people, places and history.



Field Trips and Events

Catawba Valley Gem & Mineral Club Show
 March 23-25, 2018
 Hickory Metro Convention Center
 Hickory, NC
<http://cvgmc.Com>

Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club Show
 April 6-8, 2018
 NC State Fairgrounds, Kerr Scott building
 1025 Blue Ridge Rd., Raleigh, N.C.



M.A.G.M.A.
 8th Bi-Annual
 Asheville, Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show
 March 16-18, 2018
 Fri. and Sat. 9-5; Sun. 10-4

Free Admission
 At Camp Stephens, 263 Clayton Rd., Arden, N.C.
 More info: www.wncrocks.com/magma/magmaupcomingevents.htm

Graves Mtn. Rock Swap and Dig
 April 27-29, 2018
 Lincolnton, Georgia
 Open to all clubs

Aiken GMFS is hosting the DMC field trip on April 27 to Graves Mt. A separate notice will be sent to members with information.

"Field trips are open to all members of associated clubs of the DMC program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee and to all members of SFMS member clubs who have provided their membership with SFMS liability insurance. Because of insurance requirements, members of the GENERAL PUBLIC are NOT invited on this or any DMC program field trips!"
 DMC Program / SFMS Field Trip committee's purpose: To collect field trip information from its member societies; schedule and coordinate field trip dates; disseminate field trip information to all member clubs so that each member society may publish this information as one of their "official" scheduled field trips.

REFRESHMENTS 2018

DATE	NAME	PHONE
1/12	cancelled	
2/9	Sally & Jerry Lipsky; S.Sterrett/D.Dunlap	865.382.2159© 803.331.4882©
3/16	B.Fenstermacher; Chris Glass	803.646.6957© 706.284.9239©
4/13	Mark/Nancy Pitts; Herb/Pat Martin	803.270.8719© 803.648.0891
5/11	Linda Sarkany;	803.642.1284
6/8	Marilyn Hodge Dennis Scherer; Jessica Pine	803-649-0174 717-991-4241
9 /14	Chris Glass;	706.284.9239©
10/12	Margaret Marion Jim Sproull;	803-641-0816
11/ 9	Debra Baer; Kelly Hovey	803-295-7897
12/14	POTLUCK SUPPER	

AGMFS Officers and Committees 2018

President: Walt Kubilius
 (803) 643-3281/president@aikengmfs.org
Vice President: Debbie Baer
 (803) 295-7897 / vicepresident@aikengmfs.org
Secretary: Sharon Sterrett
 (803) 649-0174 / secretary@aikengmfs.org
Treasurer: Kathleen Wallis
 (803) 643-3281/ treasurer@aikengmfs.org
Editor: Barbara Fenstermacher
 (803) 649-0959 / houndshowl@gmail.com
Federation Liaison: Barbara Fenstermacher
Field Trip Committee/ DMC Liaison: John Kolmar, Jim Gee, Debbie Baer and Herb Martin
 (803) 642-3767 (John) / lkolmar@gmail.com
Webmistress: Patti Bennett webmaster@aikengmfs.org
USCA Liaison: Walt Kubilius
Librarian/Bag'nTag Coordinator: Jerry Lipsky



OUR 30th SHOW
MARCH 9-11

SETUP IS Thursday,
March 8 at 9a.m.

Julian Smith Casino, 2200 Broad St., Augusta

The Hound's Howl
Aiken Gem, Mineral and Fossil Society
P.O. Box 267
Aiken SC 29802-0267

FIRST CLASS MAIL

March 2018

Program: Mining for Gems
by Amos Cunningham

March 16 at 7 PM

USC-Aiken Science Building, Room 200



The **Aiken Gem, Mineral and Fossil Society** operates as a non-profit, educational organization affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.(AFMS), the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies, Inc. (EFMLS), and the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.(SFMS).

The purpose of the Society is to stimulate interest in collection of gem and mineral materials and fossils and to impart knowledge of lapidary work, mineralogy, paleontology, collecting and classification of minerals and fossils, and the application in the art so greater pleasure may be derived from these activities.

The Society meets at 7:00 p.m., second Friday of the month, in Room 200 of the USC-Aiken Science Building located in the University complex on University Parkway in Aiken. There are informal meetings in July and August. The annual dues, payable by December 31, are \$20 for a family membership, \$15 for a single adult membership and \$2 for a junior/student member.

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The Society's web page, www.aikengmfs.org offers more information about the history of the club, our annual Gem, Mineral and Fossil Show, education links and community projects. See photos of our field trips and events on our **Facebook** page.

The Aiken Gem, Mineral and Fossil Society: 2018 Membership Application

Current Date _____ Please check one: New *or* Renewal

Name _____ DOB (month/day) _____ Spouse's Name: _____ DOB _____

Address _____

Email Address: _____ DO Anniversary _____

Children's names (those active in Club only) and DOB _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell/work phone: _____

I give my consent to the Aiken Gem, Mineral and Fossil Society (AGMFS) to use my name and likeness for publicity purposes and to promote Society activities (Check one): Yes *or* No

Please check one type of membership and one type of newsletter preference.

Membership: Dues Family \$20 *or* Dues Single \$15 *or* Dues Student \$2 grade/school

Note: New members joining from July–December, 1/2 price with full price membership in January.

(Family is defined as spouse and/or children under 18 living at the same address)

Newsletter preference: Email (*free* to all members) *or* Snail mail (add \$10 per address per year)

TOTAL: \$ _____

Make check payable to: Aiken Gem and Mineral Society

Kathleen Wallis, AFMS Treasurer
1142 Ridgemont Drive
Aiken, SC 29803

Cash _____ Check # _____
Amount: _____ Date: _____