

GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB
DECEMBER 2009

the Prez Sez ...

Happy Holidays to all from the president

I hope to see you all this Friday evening at the annual holiday party for our club at Amity Church. It has been a fast year for me and things are beginning to wind down and hopefully next year I will have much more time to devote to our club and the pursuit of my love for the world of gems and minerals.

Our club has gained several new members over the year and I want to welcome you all again. Our classes in gem cutting were not as active as I would have liked during the later part of the year due to health issues with our two teachers.

One being me and the other being Murray Simon. Hopefully, the new year will bring more Saturdays filled with students cutting pretty stones.

Linda Simon's wire and jewelry classes continue to be packed with eager students and she has a dedicated space for her sessions thanks to member Kim St. Jean.

I especially want to thank all of the officers and directors of our club

who worked very hard over the year to grow and improve our club. We have plans for more events next year to increase the awareness of our club.

I missed the November meeting due to back problems but was told that you are stuck with me for one more year. I thank you for your confidence. We are always looking for enthusiastic and passionate volunteers, so if you are one who would like to contribute your talents and energies, please see me or any officer or director.

On a more somber note, many of you may have heard of the tragedy at Lapidary Arts a few weeks back. One afternoon around Thanksgiving, according to what I have been told, three thugs entered the store and pistol whipped the manager, Ruby and a customer.

I understand that the injuries were severe and that the robbers took their time and left with over \$35,000.00 in jewelry, stones and cash. I have also been told that the company had about five thousand dollars in insurance.

Many of our club members have

shopped at this long term Charlotte business. If any member cares to give a gift of random kindness, please see Murray or me and we will see that it is delivered.

It is my hope that your new year be not only filled with lots of rocks, minerals, gems and jewelry crafts but that your horizons expand and your creativity grows. My time with this club has been blessed by this association.

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May your holiday time be filled with faith and blessings and may this be a time of love.

In my volunteer time at the Charlotte airport, one of the most rewarding things for me is to thank the young passing soldiers for our country. May we all pray for peace.

*Jack King,
President, Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club*



November Aucton Was A Success

Our November regular meeting was our annual auction, and lots of good material was sold. Some nice cutting rough, mineral and fossil samples, magazines and books, and even a few "eggs", both soft and *really hard boiled* were sold. The club made several hundred dollars - thanks to all who attended!

Notice - Newsletter

There will be no February newsletter as your editor will once again be heading out to those places described above and will be gone the last half of January and the first 2-3 weeks in February.

Non-Collectable Stamps

by Pat Walker

It has been passed down from upon high, that the Pitney Bowes imprints are no longer considered collectable, so please don't save them and pass them in to Pat Walker with the other stamps.

Thank you !



December Meeting - Holiday/Christmas Party

Friday December 11th, 2009

7:00 pm

Amity Presbyterian Church

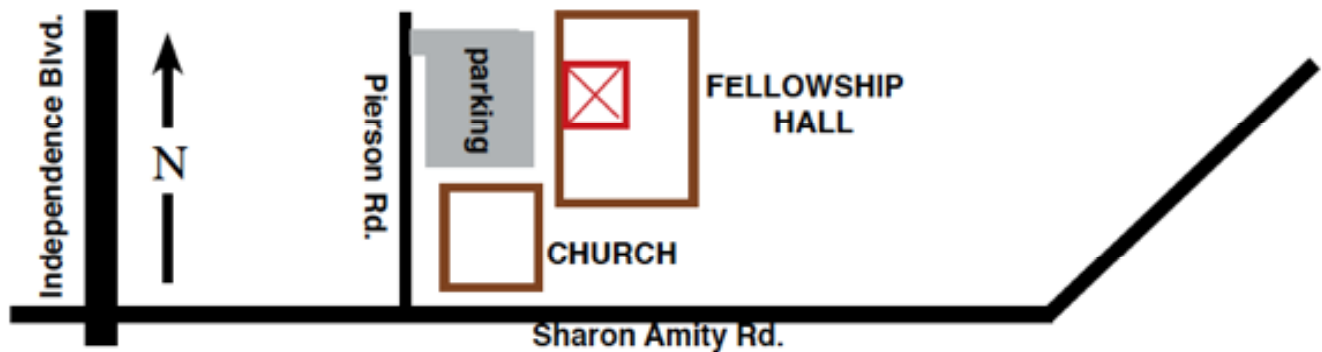
2831 N Sharon Amity Rd

Charlotte, NC 28205

The Club will be providing meat, drinks, and paper products. Please bring a vegetable, dessert, or salad dish to pass, along with serving utensils.

The yearly scholarships will be presented - rumor has it there may be a bit of music this year - If you wish to participate in the gift exchange, bring a wrapped gift, connected to our hobby. Everyone who brings a gift will be permitted to exchange a gift on the table.

***If you are planning on attending the party and haven't RSVP'ed yet,
please call Pat Walker, 704 523-5261***



Charlotte Jr. Rockhounds

***Will Not be meeting this month
due to the busy holiday season.***

***The meetings will begin again next year
in January, (January 30th)***

The Topic will be Micro Mounts

Look for more info in the next newsletter.

Using a Digital Camera to Photograph slabs, cabs, gemstones, minerals and jewelry - Part VII by ron gibbs



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3

In our miniature photography studio there are dozens of small accessories that can make our job easier in lighting, and holding the various objects to be photographed.

First get a supply of small clamps (top photo), the more the better. These things come in handy for holding all kinds of small reflectors to highlight specific parts of the items being photographed. Don't limit yourself to just the concept of mechanical clamps either. One of the most versatile materials in my tool box is the material known as "liquid thumb-tack". It can be used to hold the product being photographed or can also be used to actually hold reflectors near a sample.

Besides liquid thumb-tack I also recommend oil based modeling clay. The water based products will try out and become stiff, whereas the oil based clays stay flexible almost indefinitely. The liquid thumb-tack is shown in the second photo, with the modeling clay the slightly lighter colored material. The modeling clay is purchased by the pound and is very inexpensive, the thumb-tack is also inexpensive but you typically only get a couple of small sticks in a package.

The third photo shows a variety of clamps (and clay) being use to hold reflectors made of plastic, paper, 3x5 cards, and even small mirrors. A useful stand alone mirror-reflector can be created by using two small rectangular mirrors with a piece of gray tape on the back acting as a hinge. They can be placed on the table at roughly a right angle and will stand without further support.

Notice that clay can be used as a base to hold the reflector directly or it can be used to hold an alligator type clip which then holds the reflector. The clip can be positioned at virtually any angle in the clay.

A collection of "white" (I stress white) paper, thin modeling plastic, 3x5 cards, silver aluminum foil, and perhaps some brass foil to add warmth are all useful reflector materials. Most can be obtained at office supply or hobby stores.

I also have several small pieces of acrylic plastic (plexi-

glas) drilled to accept small wooden dowels. (See the second photo. These provide a wide variety of small supports for jewelry, cabochons, slabs or mineral specimens.

Photos 4 and 5 show the back and front view of the plastic and small wooden dowel holders. I also use 12" x 12" acrylic plastic as a background for much of my work, and drill the holes directly into the background base. The dowels were obtained in a package of 200+ from Michael's Art Supply and are about 1/16" in diameter. They can easily be trimmed to the needed length, and the modeling clay or liquid thumbtack" is used to adhere them to the subject material. A little window cleaner and paper towels will remove any residue from the plastic.

Another useful platform for jewelry is a clear CD case. Photo 6 shows a clear front (often called jewel case) CD case sitting on a strip of rubber shelf paper. The rubberized paper provides enough friction to hold the CD case at a selected angle. Thus it can be pointed directly at the camera lens.

Background material is placed in the joint behind the plastic, and the stone or jewelry is attached to the front with the clay. Earrings can be attached to a small pair of holes in the clear plastic front. The background material can hang straight or it can be curved and is placed far enough behind the plane of the jewelry or stone so it is out of focus. With proper lighting the clear plastic just disappears.

I'm sure I have forgotten a few things I use on a regular basis but will cover them in future articles on lighting set ups. Next month I will begin discussing some lighting techniques that I use on cabochons. (As we'll discover many of the techniques can be used for more than one thing, so some of the cab lighting also worked on jewelry and mineral samples.) There will be a break in February as the author (that's me!) will be in Quartzsite and Tucson so no newsletter will be published!

Have a nice holiday season!



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6

Planning for Tucson 2010

by ron gibbs

There are more than 30 separate shows running in Tucson during the first two weeks of February. Not all shows run simultaneously, but most overlap some on the middle week-end of the whole show. The major exception is the Tucson Gem & Mineral Club show which runs during the second week and the final weekend. This show takes over the Tucson Convention Center when the AGTA (American Gem Trade Association) Show ends.

Many of the shows support more than a hundred different dealers, so there is plenty to see and do while in Tucson. I have visited the shows for the past three years and will try to tell you a little about my favorite shows and the what to expect at each. By the very nature of Tucson's size this will be highly abbreviated.

First, and foremost, I do not try to attend all of the shows, and I avoid the pure bead shows as they have no interest for me personally. I stay in Tucson for 7 - 10 days and never see the whole thing. So here goes, my opinions ...

The AGTA show runs the first week and is a wholesale gem and jewelry show, it's hard to gain entrance even with a business license. You need credit reports and/or recommendations from those showing. It has mainly high-end gemstones, jewelry, and diamonds. You can walk on the internal walkway at ground level and look down into the show if you are interested.

The GJX show is another wholesale show and I highly recommend this one. It is about the same size as the AGTA show and has a wide array of vendors with colored gems, cabochons, carvings, and jewelry. It has a wider price range of products than the AGTA show. Both shows support some of the best known prize winners in jewelry and gemstone creation. They also have the Idar-Oberstein group as part of the show.

Across the road (US-10) from these two shows are three interesting shows:

The Globe-X show (Days Inn) is mixed show open to the public, a lot of Chinese and far east materials, statues, larger size objects, some jewelry and gems, but not a large amount. Worth seeing but I have never found it of strong interest for me.

The Rapa-River Show, another mixed bag, if you have the time take a look. It's a mixture of many things with nothing particularly dominant. A smaller show with limited number of vendors.

The Pueblo Gem & Mineral Show (now the Riverpark Inn), this is the largest of the three continuous shows and has many things of interest for nearly everyone. They have cut stones, slabs, rough, minerals, jewelry, and wide variety. It's a public show but many dealers will sell wholesale with license. Many unique things can be found in this show. It's room to room, and one large tent. One of my favorites.

The AKS Gem show. (LaQuinta Inn) is what the name implies, mainly cut gemstones with a wide variety from world wide locations. A nice show that is again room to room for about 90%, with a few small tents behind. For unmounted stones a worthwhile look.

The GLDA Show is long trip out of town, but a beautiful setting. It's up in the low mountains west of Tucson in a high-end resort. The show is mainly jewelry with some free cut gemstones, and a nice collection of opal (doublets, triplets, etc.). The opal and cut stones are reasonably priced. This is a wholesale only show.

Electric Park Show and Electric Park RV Show. The first show is the location to shop for tools, all of the lapidary tool vendors are here, Diamond Pacific, Crystalite, Kings, etc. A huge array of and tools in the large tent as well as a mix of misc. findings, cut stones, etc. Some interesting minerals, rough and few slabs in the open area behind. The RV Show is the largest collection of slabs in one place in Tucson. A wide variety of slabs, some from the mine owners themselves. These two shows are the "true lapidary shows" of Tucson. If this interest you allow a half to full day between them.

GL&W has several shows around Tucson but the largest is the combined Holiday and tent show in south Tucson. A wholesale only show. Many vendors with cut stones, cabs, finished jewelry, a smattering of tools, lots of pearls, and "knickknacks" and small shelf materials for gift shops. Also a

large representation of beads. The two shows are within about a block of each other supports several hundred dealers.

Rio Grande Catalog in Motion (Hilton Hotel) - a long way out, a must see show for anyone doing their own jewelry or craft work. A room full of great demonstrations with much of their equipment. 3 or 4 times a day 1 to 2 hour in depth demos at the lobby area, pick up all the latest catalogs, place orders there for materials you see, and they have full day classes available

(but sign up weeks before show.) If you are a jewelry maker it's at least half day or more.

Inn Suites Show - mostly minerals but some rough and some carved gems, and fine cabochons. Meteorites, and a mixed wholesale/retail show. Lots of interesting things to see, very large mineral and huge fossil specimens. Some really fine lapidary art work. It's room to room for much of the show, but there are a couple of showrooms, it's large but impressive.

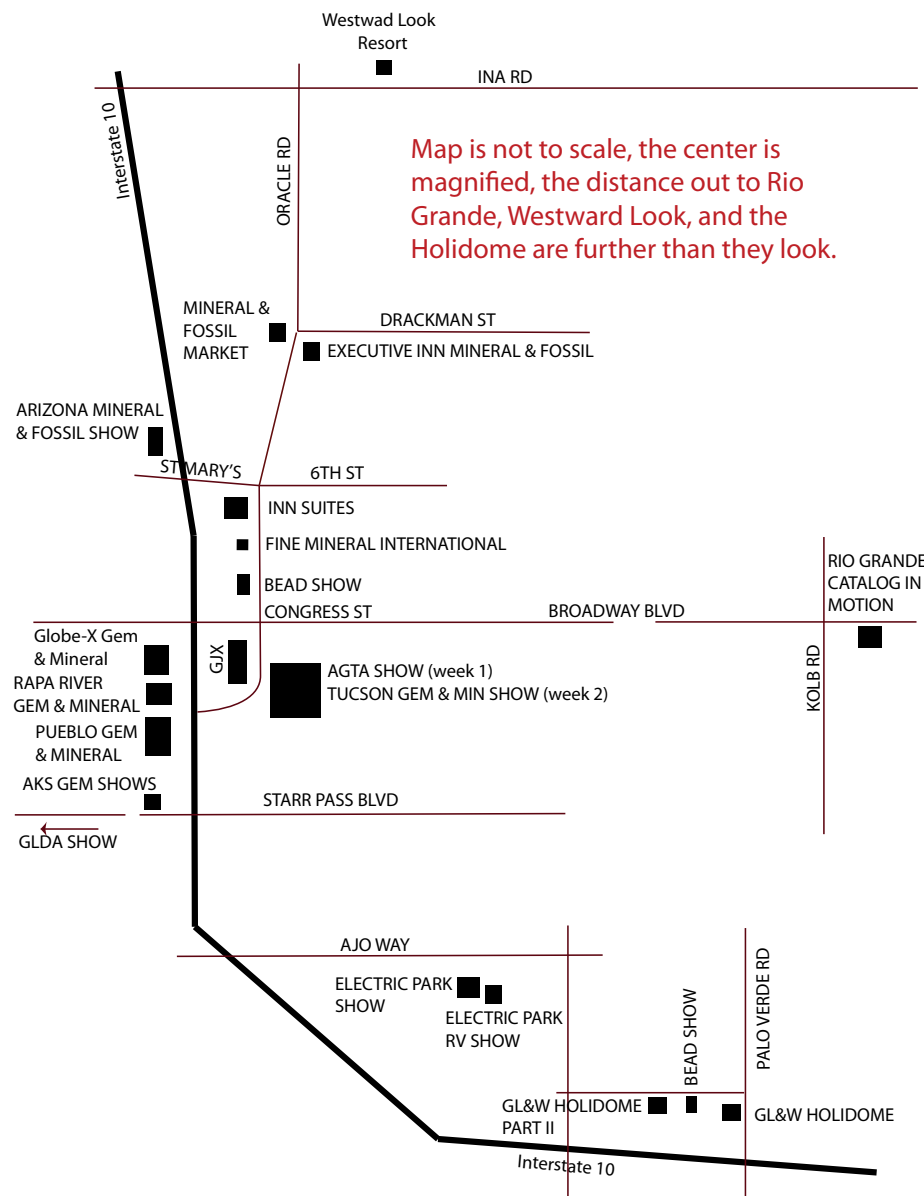
Arizona Fossil and Mineral Show - a hodgepodge, a few interesting dealers, but pretty strongly fossil focused. If your interested in fossils I would give it a thumbs up, otherwise only if you have some spare time.

Executive Inn Suites - mostly a room to room mineral show with a few notable exceptions. There is a great hand-tool diamond dealer in the small ball room, and several of the mineral dealers have other interesting things in their rooms. Many of the dealers are from Europe, China, and South America. English is not always spoken well, but deals can be made. Some nice unusual higher end cutting rough usually available.

Across street from the previous, Mineral and Fossil Marketplace - dealers who like to sell by the pound. Glenn Archer, Australian Outback mining, always interesting material, a couple of interesting Moroccan dealers, and some from South America. Good larger agates, labradorite, and many large fossils. I always stop here. There are sometimes a couple of other small shows within walking distance, varied materials.

Westward Look Resort - One of the premiere mineral shows, high end minerals and fine displays. Like going to a fine museum! They sometimes have an evening program that is open to the public and very nice. A beautiful setting to-boot.

After the AGTA show clears out (end of first week) the Tucson gem and Mineral Club take over the convention center and have



their annual show. Mostly (but not entirely) mineral based, with a super list of programs and lectures around the event. There is a face-tors meeting during the week, and a micro-mounters meeting, etc.

This is a taste of Tucson. There are likely as many shows that I did not mention as ones I described. Some are tiny, some are large. There are also some full time dealers who live in the city and have their own walk in businesses. Don't be overwhelmed, the Tucson show cannot be seen in a single visit even if you spent the entire two week. Try to pick out the particular shows that have the most interest for you and see them first. The free Tucson show guide (a 300-400 page book) is located in nearly every show and has a complete (well nearly) list of vendors and locations. Grab a copy and plan your attack!

End of year Calendar 2009

December, 11th, 2009 - Annual Holiday/Christmas Party and Dinner with the awarding of both the Club Scholarships, and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte sponsored scholarships for 2009.

December 11-13 - NORCROSS, GA : 16th Annual show, North Trade Center, 1700 Jeurgens Ct. Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5 More than 40 dealers, gems, fossils, minerals, jewelry, and door prizes. * foot tall pre-historic cave bear Contact: Richard Hightower, 7334 Quail Run Rd., Lizella, CA 31052, (478) 935-9245

December 18-20--GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA: Show; Greensboro Gem & Mineral Club; Greensboro Coliseum West Wing, 1921 W. Lee St.; Fri. 2-7, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 11-5; admission 1 can of food for Urban Ministries; door prizes, geode cutting, lapidary and faceting demonstrations; contact Joe Maguire, 3501 Giovanni Way, Greensboro, NC 27410, (336) 288-7452; e-mail: joe_maguire@prodigy.net; Web site: www.GGMC-rockhounds.com

2nd Saturday of each Month - Wirewrap instruction, Expressive Impressions at 2215 Aysley Town Blvd., Suite G. - 10:30 am - 2:00 pm. - Contact Linda Simon (lsimon1@carolina.rr.com) for more information. or call: Phone 704-375-9300

***Unreal Topaz,
Spodumene, Amethyst,
Citrine, Ametrine, and
others*** Danny Jones/Ron

Unreal? Well the markets are beginning to get a bit crowded with ***irradiated*** and modified specimens and gemstones. Now there is fundamentally nothing wrong with irradiating poorly colored samples to make them look better, ***as long as*** the treatment is advertised in advance, and the buyer is aware. Unfortunately many buyers are neither aware or told in advance of their purchases.

For some further reading try these links:

<http://www.mindat.org/mesg-55-115632.html> (minerals irradiated)
<http://www.yourgemologist.com/ISGForumsBoard/forumdisplay.php?f=61> (gemstone info)
<http://www.GemstoneTreatmentReport.com/> (more gemstone info)

