

GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB
NOVEMBER 2009

the Prez Sez ...

It is great to live in the Carolinas this time of year. Sweater weather has returned and our crisp fall days are great. I can't say that those dreary rainy days we have had recently are my favorite however.

November is a fun time for our monthly club meeting and all members should do their best to join us, Thursday evening, at 7:00 P.M. Nov. 19th at the Nature Museum for our annual club auction which is a major fundraiser. Bring some extra rocks to sell or come and buy some. Bring some jewelry that you have made or come and take some home with you.

Once again, Danny Jones has agreed to be our auctioneer. In the past we have seen finished cabochons being sold so you wire wrappers will likely see some pretty pieces again. If you are lucky, Ron Gibbs may donate some of his spectacular composite cabs.

You will never know what you may have missed if you do not come to this important meeting. I have even heard a rumor that our treasurer, Gale may bring some free range eggs from her back yard. I have also heard that Becky is bringing some gemstone eggs to be sold.

Danny received a huge pile of old Rock and Gem and Lapidary Journal magazines and these are always great sources of valuable information.

Also at our November meeting, the board will present the slate of officers for next year and our members will have the opportunity to nominate others and to elect our new officers. (Our newsletter editor will post this slate further in this edition).

While you are marking your calendar, be sure to put a big mark for our annual Christmas party held at Amity church on Friday evening, Dec. 11th. I would like to thank my fellow officers and directors as well as all members who have provided food and fellowship to make our club better.

Mary Fisher continues to do noble work in being our lead person for our junior rockhound program. Once again, the juniors will be making a jewelry craft in our classroom. It was great last year to see these kids make Christmas gifts with gemstones for loved ones. Our membership has grown during this year and we welcome our new members.

Our board is currently working on planning for events for next year which will offer our club more exposure to the community at large. More to come in the December newsletter.

We are always looking for dedicated volunteers for various projects and events. If you would like to step up to the plate, please speak to any officer or director. Soon, the two major schools: William Holland School of Lapidary Arts in

Table of Contents

- 1.) Prez Sez
- 2.) 2010 Nominations
- 3.) Meeting November
- 3.) Jr. Rockhounds Announce
- 4-6.) Photography Part VI
- 7.) Nov. Auction Night
- 7.) Holiday Party
- 8.) Wire Wrapper Meeting
- 8.) Event Calender



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open

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open

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open

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open

Christmas Party Chair

Pat Walker

www.charottegem.com

Young Harris, Ga, and Wildacres, in Little Switzerland, NC will publish their class schedules for 2010.

Several of our club members have taught at these schools and will teach again next year. Any person who has attended either school will tell you that there is no better value anywhere. Where else can you go for an entire week of fellowship, have a class, eat good food and have a good place to lay your head each night for around three hundred dollars! I highly recommend that you place this high on your list for next year.

I look forward to seeing you at our auction. Bring stuff to donate and bring a pocket full of money to bid on some treasures!

Jack King, President, Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club

(P.S. I'm offering something new this year for our auction. A one-on-one slab and cab two hour private session in my shop at home. During this time you will take a rock, put it in the slab saw, pick a slice that you cut then do the entire process to produce your very own cabochon stone. AND, I will even furnish the rock if you don't have one!)

Nominated list of officers for the 2010 year.

Our energetic nominating committee has lined up the following slate of officers for the club in 2010. This groups can be elected (or challenged) when we vote at the November meeting.

Anyone interested in joining or replacing any potential officers can add their name to the list at the November meeting.

Nominatons from the floor are acceptd with the only requirement

that the person being nominated must have agreed to run. The list -

President: Jack King

Vice President: Muary Simon

Secretary: Pat Walker

Treasurer: Gayle Blevins

Editor: Ron Gibbs

Dir. at Large: Ken Anderson

Dir. at Large: Scott Stewart

Past Pres: Jimmy Strickland



***November Meeting of the
Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club***

Thursday, November 19th, 2009

7:00 pm the Nature Museum

Annual Club Auction

**Lots of slabs, cabs, minerals, and jewelry
will go up for bid this month. Come out
a take home a few treasures for yourself.
Danny Jones will be this years auctioneer!**

*You can't miss Danny - he's the one taller than
and sometimes wearing a kilt!*

See article later in newsletter for more information

Charlotte Junior Rockhounds

**Please note: There is no regular
Junior Rockhounds meeting on the
last Saturday of November or December!**

***Special November Meeting is for Members Only:
Saturday, November 14, 2009***

Contact Mary Fisher for
November class times and information

CGAM Clubhouse
At the Camera World on Commonwealth Ave.

Meeting size is limited.
Parents are encouraged to attend with students.

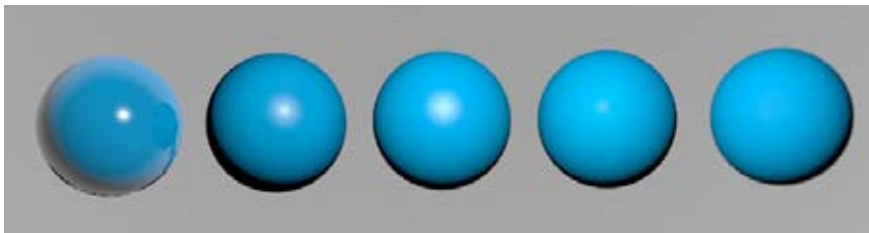
In order for materials to be ready, you must sign up ahead of time:
Contact Mary Fisher at mefisher@att.net

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

As discussed last month lights have a color (measured in degrees Kelvin), and an energy rating (brightness) that is a function of the wattage. Using a reflector produces “directed light” and increases the output from a bulb by reflecting the axial light mostly in one direction.

Another property of light can be described as “quality” and plays a major role in gemstone and jewelry photography. The quality of light can be described from hard to soft. Hard light is created when the light source is generated from something near a “point source.” A naked bulb, open metallic reflector, or a flash produces this type of light.

When light strikes an object it is reflected from that object. Soft objects, like cloth or fine textured surfaces, have a reflectivity that spreads light over the surface and reflects over a wide area. Hard objects, like metals, plastics, and stone, tend to reflect light at single concentrated points, and reflect in specific directions. A visual clue as to the hardness or softness of any surface is the size and brightness of the “specular reflection.” A specular reflection is a mirror like reflection that reflects predominantly at a narrow angle. A diffuse reflection is one that breaks the reflected light into a wide range of angles as it is reflected. All materials have a component of each type, but the eye differentiates the specular much easier.



In general, hard light will illuminate an object and enhance textures and surface characteristics. Hard objects show small, tight, specular highlights (left sphere in the series), and soft objects show gentle light fall off over the entire surface (right two spheres in series.)

As a general rule of thumb we use hard light to illuminate soft surfaces, and we use soft light to illuminate hard surfaces. Since most of the jewelry world is full of hard surfaces we need to temper the light and make it softer so highlight don't turn featureless white. How do we create softer light?

We use diffusers to create softer light. Diffusers are placed between the light source and the object being illuminated, they are made up of translucent materials that will scatter the light. Another way to diffuse light is to use reflected light from a soft surface. Diffuse light will tone down specular highlights and make the specular component larger and less bright. The trade off is the loss of some detail information. Diffuse light will not produce strong shadow boundaries and thus not differentiate textures as well as non-diffuse light.

At the top of the next page are three images side by side with different lighting. The first one has no diffusers on the light, the second one has mild diffusion, and the last one has strong diffusion. First examine the large cabochon on the left of each image. In the first image, the actual light shape and reflector is clearly visible in the strong highlight. The center of each highlight is entirely devoid of any texture or information. Look next at the leaf in this image and the shadow it casts on the back of the jewelry piece. The shadow follows the precise shape of leaf's edge. In the middle photo the cabochon highlight is a bit softer and the leaf's edge has a little less detail. In the final image, the diffusion has eliminated the bulb shape, and the cabochon highlights are no longer pure white. The shadow edge is barely distinguishable.



To the right are the three light reflectors and their associated diffusers. The first is the reflector only without any diffusion, the second uses a thin piece of flexible foamed plastic over the reflector, and the third uses a translucent piece of rigid corrugated plastic as the diffuser. (**Important Note:** these types of diffusers should **NEVER** be used with tungsten or halogen bulbs as they get too hot. All of the bulbs used in this example were fluorescent bulbs.)

There are several other methods of obtaining diffuse light. One of those currently in vogue with most table-top photographers is the light tent. These are small (usually white nylon) structures that can be folded flat or “pop-up” to form a white translucent box around an object. They come in various sizes and are light weight and easily transported. Exterior lighting is placed around the tent, and the nylon diffuses it around the object(s) being photographed. (Remember you still need color corrected lighting on the outside, they do not color correct, they simply diffuse the color of light provided.)

They work well for medium and larger items, but their lighting is not easily fine tuned to provide for special case items or lighting conditions. Below are a couple of examples of light tents with their external lights. I have found the 20-24” size to be about optimal for most jewelry work. The smaller 12” size makes it more difficult to position items after the initial set-up.



no diffusion



ethafoam diffuser



corrugated plastic diffuser

Below are images of the 12” tent set up inside the 24” tent, and a photo of the 12” tent folded for storage or transport.



12” & 24” light tents



folded light tent

There are other things that can also be used to provide diffuse, even, illumination for small objects. A make-shift light tent can be created using a stackable white - storage bin turned on it's open end. The thicker plastic makes it more difficult to get strong lighting through to the interior, but it can also be lighted from the bottom using a light box or a directed light shining upward through corrugated or acrylic plastic. See top image to the right.



white storage bin

One of my favorite methods of shooting small jewelry is to use a plastic salad bowl. These can be either translucent or somewhat opaque white in color. They are usually made from polyethylene or polypropylene. A whole is cut in the bottom of the bowl to fit the camera lens, and then bowl can then be lighted from the sides or from beneath using a light box.



translucent and white plastic bowls

Many different results are possible with this setup, and they will be discussed in more detail when we get to specific lighting setups for specific items. To the right are photos of two bowls and one more that shows a camera positioned on the bottom of a bowl with light coming from a light box positioned beneath.

Finally one of the simplest methods of creating diffuse light is to use a reflector made of white paper, cloth, or white board. Shinning a light onto a large surface will reflect that light and diffuse it at the same time. I sometimes use a single light source (with diffusion) from one side and then se a white reflector on the opposite side to provide lower density soft "fill-in" light to open up otherwise dark shadow areas.



camera pointd through hole in bowl

The left image below is without a white reflector on the right, and the second image was captured with a white reflector on the right. The bounced light fills in the shadow areas and provide nice detail without creating any washed out specular highlights. Another visual clue is the shadow on the right is created by the stronger light to the left of the mineral, and the reflected light is insufficient to fill-in and remove the shadow entirely.

Last month we learned that we need white light to reproduce color in the proper range, and that this can be obtained from the use of 5000°K - 6500°K color temperature bulbs. For most of the work we do with lapidary materials and jewelry we need to use diffuse (soft) lighting to help control the strong specular highlights we will otherwise obtain. I find most work can be done with two lights and reflectors, but that on a few occasions a third light with reflector is useful.



Diffuse from left - no reflector



Diffuse from left - reflector on right

To summarize the basic lighting set up needed for close-up digital photography is 2 (or 3) positionable lights with the same color balance. I typically prefer the slightly warmer look of 5000°K bulbs, but all 6500°K or 5500°K are fine too. It is best not to mix them. I recommend fluorescent bulbs with between 30 and 40 watts of power.

Obtain some materials for diffusing the lights, I use the soft foam plastic called ethafoam often found as a wrapping or insulation material. I also like corrugated plastic and prefer the translucent white rather than opaque white variety, but I use both. This material can be obtained from art stores (*Dick Blick* on-line) or yard signage shops.

You will also need a small supply of clamps (I sometimes use the larger spring paper clips or small hobby clamps to attach the diffuser material to the light.)

Finally either build a PVC pipe rack to aid in light positioning, or get some weighted objects, both as described in the previous newsletter.

Assuming you have your camera and a tripod, were just about ready to begin setting up our tabletop studio and to start the image capture process. Next month, I will discuss a few small (handy to have) items that will aid in holding the cabochons, jewelry and other miscellaneous objects we will shoot and provide some nice background materials.

November Auction Night & Point Sheets Are Due!

Our November meeting is traditionally our annual auction, and we elect the officers for next year. The auction is carried out to raise funds for the club, and its activities. We sell geodes at Matthews Live each year, and this money is earmarked for use in club scholarships. We usually provide 1 or 2 scholarships to the local Geology department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. They will be announced at the December Christmas Party.

We also give 1 or 2 internal scholarships to our own members to attend William Holland or Wild Acres School each year. To be eligible for the internal scholarships members must turn in their *point sheets* at the November meeting or get them to Linda Simon at least a week before the Christmas Party where the winners will be drawn. Each member who qualifies with a point sheet is placed into a random drawing for next year's club scholarships. Point sheets (with instructions) can be obtained from our web site at <http://www.charlotte.gem/gemclubpoints.pdf>

Now back to our November Auction: items for bid are donated by the club members and should be things related to lapidary work (slabs, cabs, rough, fossils, gemstones, etc.), finished jewelry (wirewrap, silver work, etc.) or collection items (minerals, rocks, fossils, etc.) (However, donations of tasty pies, or sweets are never turned down!)

The monies raised from the auction are used to help support the Junior Group, refreshments for meetings, equipment purchases, or to help offset costs for the newsletter, WEB site, and similar mundane activities.

So please show up for the meeting and bring a few of your "extras" to place in bidding, and buy a few treasures to take home. It's usually a fun night with lots of surprises.

Club Holiday/Christmas Party in December -

Our annual end of year meeting is our Holiday/Christmas Party which will be held at the Amity Presbyterian Church this year. It is located at 2831 N Sharon Amity Rd Charlotte, NC 28205. It is between Albemarle Rd. and Independence Blvd. (A map can be found on our club WEB site.)

The club provides the meat dishes and drinks and the attendees bring a covered dish or desert, there is no charge for the party, but please tell

Pat Walker (704/523-5261) if you are attending and how many in your group.

Festivities begin at 7:00 pm, and the winners of the various scholarships will be announced at this meeting. Rumor has it there may even be LIVE music this year!

The date: **Friday, December 11th, 2009 - 7:00 pm**

Amity Presbyterian Church

WireWrappers Meeting this Month by Linda Simon

Our Wire Wrap Club will be meeting on the second Sat. of Nov. and we'll be making Christmas earrings.

Donna Forstner is a talented member of our club and she has graciously agreed to lead the class. She even put together kits for each of us with Swarovski crystals, sterling wire and head pins.

We will learn how to make ear wires and how to put multiple beads on a head pin. The room can accommodate 10 people so please RSVP and let both of us know if you are planning to come.

Expressive Impressions

**2215 Ayrley Town Blvd, Suite G
Charlotte NC 28273**

Phone 704-375-9300

**Date & Time:
Saturday, Nov. 14th
10:30 - approx. 2:00**

**Bring a sandwich or buy lunch
on lower level**

**RSVP to both Donna & Linda
Donna -
cinder_ella@bellsouth.net
Linda -
simonlinda@mac.com**



Calendar of Upcoming Events

November 13-15--MORGANTON, NORTH CAROLINA: Holiday show; Morganton Parks and Recreation Department; Collett Street Recreation Center, 300 Collett St.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5; adults \$3, students and children \$2; dealers, exhibits, minerals, gems, jewelry, door prizes, free gem mining interactive booth for students; contact Gary W. Leonhardt, P.O. Box 3448, Morganton, NC 28680, (828) 439-1866; e-mail: gleonhardt@ci.morganton.nc.us

November 13-15, 2009, Louisville, KY – KYANA Geological Society. Annual Mineral, Fossil, Gem, and Rock Show. Resurrection Lutheran Church Gym, 4205 Gardiner View Ave. Hours: 13th, 10:00 A.M. – 7:00 P.M.; 14th, 8:00 A.M. – 7:00 P.M.; 15th, 12:00 Noon – 6:00 P.M. Contact: Mike Whitehouse, 4304 Winter Park Dr., Louisville, KY 40218; 502.905.4988, or kyanageo@gmail.com

November, 19th, 2009 - Our November regular meeting is our annual auction. Please bring any extra goodies: rocks, slabs, jewelry, tools, minerals, etc to donate to the auction. The proceeds from this auction are used to help fund the club and its activities.

November 20-22--MARIETTA, GEORGIA: 24th annual show; Cobb County Gem & Mineral Society; Cobb County Civic Center, 548 S. Marietta Pkwy.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; free admission; door prizes; displays, live lapidary demonstrations; contact Mary Ingram, (770) 427-1108; e-mail: mandmingram@comcast.net; Web site: www.cobbcountym Mineral.org

November 27-29, 2009, Columbia, SC—Columbia, SC Gem and Mineral Society. 42nd Annual Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show, South Carolina State Museum, 301 Gervais Street. Hours: 27th & 28th, 10:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M.; 29th, 12:00 Noon– 5:00 P.M.; Contact: Sue Shrader at 803.736.9317 or ashdrader@mindspring.com and Sharon Sterrett at 803.356.1472 or ssterrett@sc.rr.com.

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 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 Ayrley Town Blvd., Suite G. - 10:30 am - 2:00 pm. - Contact Linda Simon (lsimon1@carolina.rr.com) for more information.