

GOLDRUSH LEDGER



Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club
September 2008

Prez Sez ...

WOW! Be careful what you ask for! I was hoping to get some rain before time for my annual core aeration of my yard. Last year it was so dry that the machine barely cracked the soil. This week, yard is standing in water and I was beginning to think that the new shoreline for Lake Norman would be beside my TV set.

By the time that you get this newsletter, our hard working volunteers will have had a long weekend at the MATTHEWS ALIVE festival cutting geodes all weekend over Labor Day. Our entire club owes these dedicated volunteers a round of thanks.

I would also like to give you an update on the field trip to the Crabtree Emerald mine near Little Switzerland. I had noticed in Lodestar that the Hendersonville club was sponsoring this trip and we sent out a blast telling about this famous location. Kathy and I went with our friend Robyn. This site is controlled by the MAGMA group and Kathy had sent an e-mail to them earlier in the week as we could not seem to get much of a response from the Hendersonville club as to what was going on. She was told that due to the fact that MAGMA would have a small back hoe on

site that the fee would be \$30.00 per person.

We drove up early and by the time we arrived, I would guess that there were already more than twenty cars parked and I noticed tags as far away from Florida. HOWEVER, we were now told that the fee would be \$35.00 per person due to the fact that they had a small back hoe there. Not a big deal, but definitely not good communication of facts. I had not been to this site since I was an early teen and it was good to drive back down memory lane.

In the 80's the actual mine was flooded and what is left for rock-hounds are the spoils of rocks that were previously dug out. The purpose of the backhoe was to turn over these mounds of dirt and rocks. There were lots of enthusiastic diggers including many kids cracking hammers on rocks. Although this is a beautiful mountain location, the chances of finding even a dot of an emerald are pretty slim in my opinion. Of the large group there, I only saw about four very tiny emeralds in matrix.

What you can expect to find there are some nice specimens of black tourmaline in matrix and in our

case, we found one of the two specimens that I know about of beryl crystals in matrix. Kids under 12 are free at that site so for a family of mom and dad and a couple of kids, it could be a fun day of exploring for rocks and minerals. On another note, Mary Fisher and I will attend the Home Schoolers Association to tell them about our juniors' program.

If you know of a scouting group or active youth church group,

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please let us know so that we can get them some information on this valuable program. We had five new members join our club this past month alone and our youth is where our growth lies for our club. Tell everyone you can to visit our website: www.charlottegem.com. Ron Gibbs is doing an excellent job with our website and we want more folks to know about it.

ANNUAL CLUB PICNIC: It is Saturday, Sept. 27th noon till late afternoon at our home on Lake Norman. This is a family fun event! We will have hot dogs and hamburgers and healthier alternatives for you. I ask for volunteers to bring deserts and side dishes such as slaw, potato salad and whatever is your specialty. Jimmy Strickland might even bring some of his famous chili! We will have a rock and mineral treasure pile for the kids again which was a big hit last year.

Linda Simon has promised to get a group to the side and make a bracelet or ear rings or some other fun craft. Murray and I will demonstrate cutting a cabochon and the big rock saw will be humming all day. If you have a big chunk of agate, bring it along and get in line. AND... THE highlight of the day... our annual fund raiser auction. This auction raises money for our clubhouse and our junior rockhounds program. In addition to rocks and minerals we ask that you bring anything of value that we can sell.

Last year, we sold some neat books, unwanted home decor, and some yummy baked goods. We invite you to come and bring your family and even a neighbor

or friend who may be interested in our club. I DO REQUEST A HEAD COUNT PLEASE. It is very hard to shop not knowing if I am purchasing for 15 or 50. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, send me and e-mail as to how many you are coming with. tackyjackie@bellsouth.net or call me or Kathy 704-892-7608.

The address is 20409 Island Forest Dr. Cornelius, NC 28031 and look for a map link that our editor will put up. Kathy and I look forward to welcoming you to our home, showing you our rock collection and rock room where I cut my gemstones. Last year was a sharing day that was very rewarding to us and many of our members. Come join us this year! (The picnic will replace the normal monthly meeting at Discovery Place.)

On a closing note, Linda Simon has started her first wire craft class, if you missed the first one, you need to get on a list for the next one. I plan to start the first cabochon gem cutting classes hopefully in October with the help from some members. If you want to learn how, please let me know. We have the machines waiting and teachers eager to help you get started.

Jack King ...

Please bring your stamps to Pat Walker at the club Picnic this month as she wants to turn them in

soon.

Thanks!

Charlotte Junior Rockhounds!

Saturday, October 4

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

CGAM Clubhouse

At the Camera World on Commonwealth Ave.

Topic for September:

Mineral Identification!

(Learn to recognize and name over 30 Gems/Minerals)

Meeting is limited to 12 students

Ages 4-16 are welcome!

Parents are encouraged to attend with students.

Please sign up ahead of time:

If you have questions or want to sign up,
contact Mary Fisher at mefisher@att.net,

704-786-6621.

The M.A.G.M.A. Roundup Murray Simon

On the first weekend in August Linda and I responded to the invitation of a friend and, with a grandson in the backseat, drove to Asheville to attend a M.A.G.M.A. Roundup. All we were told was it would be different and fun . . . and that did turn out to be the case.

The Mountain Area Gem and Mineral Association was formed in the year 2000 to promote rock hounding in Western North Carolina and boasts a current membership of 1500. A number of field trips are conducted throughout the year in the Western North Carolina area; most are supervised and guided by

experienced collector/hobbyists with knowledge of the collecting sites and a willingness to instruct on how and where to find minerals in the field.

M.A.G.M.A. Roundups are held a few times each year. They are usually week long events and offer an opportunity for large numbers of members to get together to tell stories, sell and swap mineral treasures, listen to lectures (or watch movies) that are intended to expand the knowledge of gems, minerals and collecting. They also go on several digs - these people like to get dirty.

We arrived on Wednesday afternoon for two days of Roundup activity. The majority of participants were camped out in a field on the outskirts of Asheville (we stayed in a motel). There were larger tents with rough, finished cabs, wire-wrapped jewelry and aggatized coral for sale. A few faceters, cabbers and wire-wrappers worked at tables in front of their tents offering tips and ideas and selling the results of their skilled efforts. After making a few “things we couldn’t live without” purchases, we sat around that afternoon listening to conversations about previous digs and admiring the mineral “treasures” on display.

After pizza at a nearby restaurant, we returned to the field for a series of (outdoor) movies on opal mining in Lightning Ridge, Australia – a relatively frustrating activity that few miners appear to succeed at. It was interesting to learn that an opal will go through an average of 8 markups between the time it comes out of the mine and the time it is worn by a purchaser. With the miner on the bottom of this financial totem pole, opal mining is not likely to make anyone rich – but they all hope to make the “big find”.

On Thursday morning we drove out to the Crabtree Mine with digging equipment and high expectations. In the past there have been some interesting emerald-containing specimens to come out of the tailings from this sealed mine but there was little to be found on this hot and humid day. We took advantage of the Crabtree Mine’s proximity to Spruce Pines and spent the afternoon wandering through the

Gem and Mineral Show (where we managed to find a few more “things we couldn’t live without”).

Thursday night back at the campground we had an opportunity to watch a very interesting film on the mining of Lapiz Lazuli in Afghanistan. It’s easy to understand why this beautiful material has such a high price on its head. Getting to the mines takes days of arduous travel on horseback, jeep and on foot. A lot of the journey takes place late at night to avoid bribe-seeking border guards and thieves. The mines themselves are located high up on the side of the mountain and require a difficult climb just to reach them - carrying down the raw material is yet another challenge. If you are fortunate to have a supply of Lapiz, handle with care and use it judiciously.

We had to get our grandson home for Friday night football practice. On our way out of Asheville we made a stop at a very interesting rock shop – The Silver Armadillo. This is a huge store that has been in operation for 17 years. While it is really a high-end gift shop that focuses on large mineral specimens (for those MacMansions), carved semi-precious stones and jewelry, the female owner is a true rock hound and some impressive rough can be found throughout the store. It’s well worth a side trip if you’re in the Asheville area.

All in all, a pleasant two days with a bit of learning thrown in for good measure.



Marty Zinn - Cartersville Mineral Show by Danny Jones

I traveled from Charlotte to Atlanta to Cartersville to scope out the new Marty Zinn production. It is 280 miles from Charlotte to Cartersville but Interstate all the way. It was an overnight trip as I wanted to be there when the show opened at 10:00 Saturday morning August 16th.

After a night in cheap (Motel 6) motel in Atlanta and an excellent country breakfast to sustain me in my mineral hunt I progressed the 40 miles up the interstate to Cartersville arriving about 9:30 AM. Most dealers were just beginning to get their rooms open. Visited with several dealers to determine crowd levels with an eye to doing the show next year. Most said that as usual Friday was VERY slow with low attendance. Saturday morning was also slow but as the day progressed the crowds begin to pick up. For a first time show it appeared to be taking a reasonable start given the price of gas.

The show was held in the Holiday Inn right in front of the Tellas Science Museum. The Museum was scheduled for opening just before the show but due to construction issues did not make it. It will be open next year and should be a big draw due to its mineral collection. This is an expansion of the old Weinman Mineral Museum which will be a major part of the new museum. This show, like several other Zinn shows, is mainly a motel room show with dealers selling out of their motel rooms. There was some dealers set-up in small hall space and two small general purpose rooms. About 60 dealers were in attendance and about 85% were mineral dealers.

Most of the dealers were from states up and down the east coast. There was one from India and New Mexico, as well two from each of California, Texas and Colorado. The dealers seemed to have a good variety of material and quality to choose from.



Wulfenite ... Danny Jones 2008

Mineral Search from Little Elm, Texas had quite a few flats of the new bi-pyramidal Wulfenite from Mexico. He was selling these with a 50% discount. Prices ranged from \$25 to \$300. I picked up a small cabinet for \$50 that is outstanding. Complete coverage of crystals. Many of the larger pieces showed more matrix but with some what larger crystals.

He also had several flats of the new Azurite and Malachite find from Mexico that came out at the Tucson Show this year. Most of these pieces were in the large thumbnail to small cabinet with the largest number being in the miniature range. Picked up a Malachite after Azurite cluster of crystals which is very nice as a location piece. Prices ranged from \$10 to \$100 for these items.

Mineral Search had quite a bit of gold nuggets. In all the nuggets were two slightly water worn gold crystals.



Gold 1 Danny Jones 2008



Gold 2 Danny Jones 2008

This material was being sold at about \$1,200 an oz. This is significantly lower than most gold for specimens are selling for.

Cardinal Minerals from Shelton, CT was in one of the first rooms I visited. Hid over by the beds were four tall stacks of Thumbnails that everyone was just walking by. I dived into these boxes and came out with several super finds. There was a water worn Topaz crystal from Rhodesia which is going to my cutter for determination. Next came a good quality Milarite crystal.



Milarite Danny Jones 2008

A harder to find mineral and usually very pricey but this was an excellent buy. Then came a crystal cluster of Collophane which is a variety of Carbonate-rich Apatite. This sure does not look like the normal Apatite as it is white tabular crystals.



Malachite after Azurite Danny Jones 2008



Collophane Danny Jones 2008

Hureaulite from the Jocao Mine in Brazil was the next to find a new home.



Hureaulite Danny Jones 2008

A Cuprite coated with Malachite from the Onganja Mine in Namibia also found a new home. Even though he is only 1.5 cm across he is very sweet. No damage and a full crystal.



Cuprite coated with malachite Danny Jones 2008

Alfredo Petrov had his usual VERY rare minerals at unbelievable prices. He had several self collected Vauxite. One was on matrix of Allophane and was more than a hemisphere.



Vauxite Danny Jones 2008

Color was outstanding and no damage. One of the best thumbnails of this rare material that I have ever seen. This one came home with me to upgrade the one in my collection. Alfredo also had Vauxite with Paravauxite that was attractive.



Japan Law Twin Danny Jones 2008

Over on a corner of his table was a thumbnail Quartz Japan Law twin coated with Scorodite and no damage. Another new addition to my collection.

Several rooms had extensive displays of the calcite in clam shells from Ruck's Pit in Florida.

Leonard Himes Minerals had his usual extensive cases of eye candy as well as quite a few items from the Philadelphia Academy of Natural Science collection.

Stone Trust displayed several large crystal Gold specimens that were outstanding. One crystal cluster about 2.5 x 2.5 inches was solid gold crystals going for \$8,500 which was an excellent price for the piece.

Trafford-Flynn Minerals were at the show with their expected quality material. I shared lunch with them and we chatted about minerals and travel.

Apalachee Minerals had a whole bed full of flats of old Agatized Coral from locations in Florida and Georgia.

There was one dealer that I can not remember their names that had some exceptional Vivianite crystals and clusters. They also had a small table of facet material of Amethyst of good to excellent color that would cut large stones. Three bowls of natural blue topaz of various shades of blue. Finally there were orange colored citrines to about 2 cm in size. I was tempted

Raj and Superb Minerals had their usual good selection of Indian Zeolites.

There were not a large number of new items but there were several dealers who had gotten recycled collections that had excellent older material for sale. I was able to visit all the dealers and get though most of the material I wanted to look at. But I in most likelihood missed several deals. You'll are going to have to come down here and get a good look at a show that has promise!

William Holland School - Summer Camp for Big Kids! Part II

by ron gibbs

Sunday night there is an orientation after dinner and all the students head off to their respective classes to meet the instructors and get a little preview of what's to come.

Basically classes start at 9:00 am after a breakfast in the cafeteria. This happens on Monday through Friday. There is a break for lunch around 12:00 noon and then back to class on most days. Wednesday afternoon is often free and you can plan to visit local collecting areas or see "the sights."

Dinner is served at 6:00 pm each evening and on Tuesday night there is a free-for-all auction. Students and instructors can donate anything for the auction, and the proceeds go for classroom materials. Some "interesting stuff" shows up at the auction and it's a light hearted event with an emphasis on fun.

Wednesday night is "tail-gate" night and anyone can sell whatever they bring. You stake out a table in the cafeteria after dinner and lots of lapidary, jewelry and other materials are suddenly for sale. This money goes to you not the school.

After dinner many classes are open and students can return to work if their instructor is present. This is not a requirement but is often done.

Jaspers - Part V will continue next month as we've run out of room this month ... YEAH!

The classes are held in the basement of Sparks Lode and sometimes in the Seabolt building. There is an elevator in Sparks lodge, and since I had a sprained knee the week I was there it became a very useful feature. It's also a place to socialize as the time it takes to traverse from floor one to floor two is substantial!



Basement of Sparks Lodge Classroom Corridor



Friday Show n' Tell Basket Weaving



Friday Show n' Tell Silver Casting

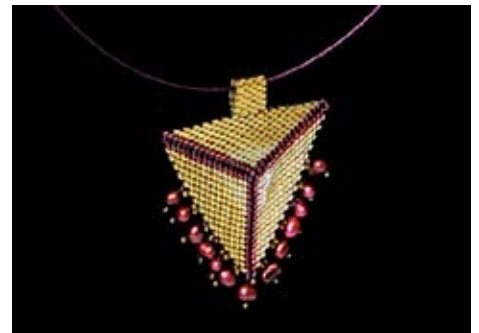
There are nice displays in the lower hall of Sparks lodge, with many slabs, cabs, mineral samples and other interesting things.



Friday Show n' Tell - Glass Fusing



Friday Show n' Tell - Cabochon Cutting



Friday Show n' Tell - Seed Beeding



Friday Show n' Tell - Silver 1

Friday, before lunch all the classes collect the goodies they have been working on all week, and set up an open display in the cafeteria where everyone can see the labors of all the classes for the week. It's pretty amazing how much is created in only a single week!

The photos of the "Show N' Tell"

sessions represent only a very small handful of the work finished during the week I attended. It's just gives you a flavor of the work completed.

After lunch on Friday it's time to return to class and begin the process of cleaning up and preparing to depart. Some people left on Friday afternoon and began the trek home. Others stayed through Friday night, and started home on Saturday morning. You fees cover the Friday night dinner (usually a cook out), and you need to check out of your room Saturday morning.

William Holland is still open this year until the first week in November. The South Eastern Federation has a series of class the week of October 12 - 18 and there are still openings.

Classes include: Cabochons, Chain making, Cold Connections, Faceting, Fused Glass, Gourd Carving, Opal Cutting, Lost Wax Casting, Digital Photography, PMC, Scrimshaw, Seed Beeding, Silversmithing, and Wire Wrap. Check the William Holland WEB site or the South Eastern Federation WEB site for more details.

William Holland

<http://www.lapidaryschool.org/>

or SFMS:

<http://www.amfed.org/sfms/william-holland-retreat.html>

**Grave's Mountain
Georgia
Rock Swap & Dig
Friday - Sunday
October 3 -5
8 am to 6 pm**

Contact info: Clarence Norman
706.359.3864 or 706.359.2381

September Club Picnic

Saturday. September 27th, Noon to 5 pm.

There will be no meeting in September at Discovery Place, rather the Club will have a Picnic/Party hosted at Jack and Kathy King' house. The burgers, hot dogs, and grilled chicken will be provided, but volunteers are needed to bring side dishes and snacks.

A "mining area" will be set up for kids to find "treasures." Cabochon cutting and wire wrapping will be demonstrated, and there will be an auction so please bring lapidary materials, bake goods, an old novel, or anything else to be auctioned. This is a fund raiser for the club.

An 18" rock saw will be cutting slabs so bring your favorite rough if you want a few slabs. Also please bring a couple of folding chairs if you have them.

Jack and Kathy's house is situated on Lake Normal so you can bring bathing suits and towels if you want to try out the water. The address is 20409 Island Forest dr., Cornelius, NC 28031 704-892-7608.

From Charlotte, come I-77 N to exit 28, Cornelius. At the top of the ramp, turn left and come 1/2 mile to Bethel Church Rd. and turn right. Go 1 1/2 miles on this road and turn right on PINEHURST.

Go about 200 yds. to a stop sign and turn right. Our house is the first on your left. Brick with an open carport. There is a new house under constructing to our right. Park on the street or in the driveway if there is room. Your hosts: Jack and Kathy King and the Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club.

This is a family event and we would GREATLY appreciate a head count so I will know how to buy food. jack@cameraworldnc.net or 704-892-7608.

8th annual tailgate rock swap/buy/sell in Moncure, NC.

Saturday, Oct 4th, 9 A.M. till 5 P.M.

Location is 535-A Old Sanford Rd. Moncure, NC.

For members who may want to set up a table and sell or swap rocks, minerals or fossils, tables are limited, so it is suggested that you take your own table. If you plan on going just to buy or swap things, I am told that there will be water and snacks available. There is NO CHARGE for space. If you want to go and have a table you should call 919-542-6112 or write The Rocks 535-A Old Sanford Rd. Moncure, NC 27559

Graves Mountain WEB site for further information
<http://www.gamineral.org/commercial-gravesmountain.htm>