

ROCKET CITY ROCKS & GEMS



The Monthly News Bulletin of the Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society, Huntsville, Alabama

Volume 52 No. 04

"We'll go to the Moon for a Rock"

April 2020

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And This Too Shall Pass



**Curtis Friday's Easter Morn Iris
 on this Easter, his 127th birthdate**

www.huntsvillegms.org/ - www.facebook.com/HuntsvilleGMS -



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Welcome to the new normal! But I hope not for long. But not to worry! The board has already met and discussed how to squeeze in all we are missing during this down time as soon as we can return to the old normal. We will do our best to reschedule the auction without impacting the picnic or the show this fall. And I can't wait to get back to the lab to cut and polish some rocks, make some jewelry and wire wrap a cabochon or two! Don't worry, we will get back there just as soon as possible as well. Until then, be safe, keep your distance and clean, clean, clean. And we will see you soon! Mike Harrison!

Brad's Bench Tips

"Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" and "Broom Casting for Creative Jewelry" are available on Amazon www.BradSmithJewelry.com. For those who enjoy these bench tips, I'm happy to announce a second volume is now available on Amazon. "More Bench Tips" includes 86 additional ways to save time, avoid frustration or improve quality at the bench. These new tips cover problems in fabrication, stone setting, casting, soldering and polishing.

Browse through a couple of the new ones at

<https://amazon.com/dp/B07D4B45JJ/>. These are just a few of the many tips in the new book, "More Bench Tips for Jewelry Making". See a sample chapter at <https://amzn.to/2KCygh4>



PROBLEMS WITH SMALL DRILLS

Drilling small holes can be a problem. With drills that are less than 1 mm (18 gauge or .040 inches), some chucks will not tighten down well enough to hold the drill securely.

The problem is easily solved in either of two ways - with a chuck adapter or by buying your small drills with a 3/32 inch shank size. Either way you have a large shank to be gripped in your drill press, Freedom or Dremel, so changing bits is fast and easy.



PRE-MADE BEZEL CUPS

As a general rule of thumb I assume it's going to take me 15 - 20 minutes to make a bezel for an ordinary cabochon, so for some projects buying pre-made cups can save a lot of time. But if you go this route, keep in mind three things.

First, try to get cups made from fine silver, not sterling. Fine silver is softer and burnishes over the stone more easily.

Second, you may have trouble matching the shape and size of the stone with the shape and size of the bezel cup. Purchased cups can only be found in a limited number of standard sizes. You may have to adjust your choice of gemstone to match the cup. The other consideration is that pre-made cups often have fairly low side walls. While these are fine for low-dome stones, they're not dependable for stones with steep side walls.

Lastly before setting, check the fit of your gemstone in the cup, particularly around the bottom. The bottom corners of a stamped cup are much more rounded than a bezel you would fabricate yourself. This causes a problem with stones that have a sharp edge around the bottom. Burnishing the bezel over one of these stones will place a lot of stress on the stone and may cause it to crack. To avoid this, I round off the bottom edge of the stone with a diamond file (or use sandpaper on soft stones).



Rocket City Jewelers (RCJ) News*By Leslie Malakowsky*

I'm very happy to report that we're all alive and well! We're practicing "social distancing" and trying to get on with our lives! Many of us are also taking time while at home to work on unfinished jewelry projects, new jewelry projects, and yes, even non-jewelry projects!

Today, we're going to try having an informal online meeting using Zoom. I think we're all looking forward to seeing each other and the projects we've been working on!

Looks like the decision about what we were going to do on April 29th is a moot point now, as the shut down due to COVID-19 continues. Hopefully, things will return to normal soon. We'll re-evaluate where we stand with the class schedule when we start meeting again.

Everyone stay well and hang in there!

The following classes will be rescheduled:

Mar 18th – Double-Drilled Bead & Byzantine Bracelet

Mar 25th – CM sample #3 make up (Inverted Round, Round, Turkish Round)

Apr 1st – Basketweave Bracelet w/Amethyst

Volunteers:

Group Leader/Lead Instructor Leslie Malakowsky

Instructors Judy Osmundson, Theresa Chivers, Myra Soroczak

Kit Manager Sherrie Bonin

Treasurer Clara Goode

Facebook open

Security Judy Osmundson

RCJ is open to **every member** of the HGMS. (Gentlemen, too!) If you love making jewelry, please join us! All skill levels are welcome! Please note that when you'd like to take a class but you don't regularly attend RCJ, **you must contact us one week prior to the class** so we can make a kit for you.

Remember our core values: to share what we know, learn new skills, and have fun! Please let me know what you are able to teach and what you would like to learn.

We meet every Wednesday from 6-9p.m. in the Paint Room (next to the Lapidary Shop) at the Huntsville-Madison County Senior Center, 2200 Drake Avenue, Huntsville.

Important: Please park in the **North parking lot** and enter the building at the **entrance next to Meals on Wheels**. The door is locked after 6:30p.m., so if you need to arrive later, please text me at (256) 755-0479,

Metal Smithing/Silver Group by Kathy Bowman & Shelley Curran



THERE WILL BE NO SCHEDULED PROJECT CLASS IN APRIL DUE TO THE COVID 19 CLOSINGS. AT THIS POINT WE DON'T KNOW HOW THE QUARANTINE SITUATION WILL BE AFTER APRIL 3RD OR IF CENTER WILL OPEN THEN. HOPEFULLY WE WILL HAVE A BETTER IDEA OF WHEN WE WILL RESUME OUR NORMAL SCHEDULE MONDAY & THURSDAY WORK SESSIONS IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS.

Tentative Next Project Class, Thursday, May7 : Setting a Cabochon (more info in the April newsletter)

As always, on nights that we do not have an official project class scheduled anyone who is certified is invited to join us to work on your projects. Instructors are available for "one on one" instruction and help on individual projects on work session nights. Anyone who missed a particular project we have had in the past and would like to work on that project. Please notify Shelley or me and we will provide you with the kit and instructions any special tools so you can work on it during our work session nights. **Please let us know in advance if the project you want to work requires special tools or equipment we bring from home so we can be sure to have them available.**

Certification Classes: If you would like to be certified so you can take our classes, please send your name and contact information (name, email address, and phone number) to HGMS@wilddivystudio.com. We will contact you and set up a day for you to come. Those who sign up will be notified when the next class will be scheduled.

Class Instructors:	Kathy Bowman & Shelley Curran
Toolbox Sign-outs	CG Lester
Inventory Manager	<i>Opening</i>
Store Manager	<i>Opening</i>
Kit Manager	Shelley Curran

Webpage & Social Media Management Kathy Bowman

*Note: We are all volunteers so the schedule is subject to change.

It is with sadness that we note the recent passing of two of our Life Members and long time supporters of the Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society.

Mahlon McConnell: 1933 - 2020

Mr. Mahlon McConnell died on 25 February at the age of 86. He and his wife Willese were active collectors of excellent stones, and he maintained a very respectable museum within their home. Both had attended HGMS meetings in Huntsville until a few years ago.

Carl Craig: 1028 - 2020

Mr. Carl Craig died on 1 March 2020 in Decatur AL at the age of 91. Carl was an avid collector and student in many areas - caver (spelunker), aircraft pilot, backpacker, hiker, canoeist, tree planter, postcard writer, naturalist, and teacher. In his career he had maintained the computers for NASA that helped put a man on the moon.

Mineral of the Month – Lonsdaleite

By Leslie A. Malakowsky



Lonsdaleite was originally reported to be a new, rare, harder form of diamond formed by impact shock, but lacking the three-dimensional regularity of diamond. It was first identified in 1967 as microscopic crystals in Canyon Diablo meteorites, which include fragments of the asteroid that created the Barringer Crater in northern Arizona. (The meteorites were named for Canyon Diablo, which lies a few miles west of the crater.)

The new mineral had a hexagonal structure, resulting in the name hexagonal diamond. Lonsdaleite consists of carbon atoms like diamond, but arranged in a different shape. It was thought that Lonsdaleite forms when meteorites containing graphite (a crystalline form of carbon) hit the Earth. The high temperatures and pressures of the impact transform the graphite into diamond, but the hexagonal crystal structure of the graphite is retained, hence the name.

Lonsdaleite was named after Dame Kathleen Lonsdale, an Irish crystallographer (among other professions). During her career, Dame Lonsdale achieved many firsts for women scientists. For example, she was the first woman president of the International Union of Crystallography and the first woman president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science.

When German geologist and mineralogist Frederick Mohs created his scale of mineral hardness in 1812, diamond was the hardest known naturally occurring substance. At the top of the Mohs scale with a hardness of 10, April's birthstone has been known for nearly 200 years as the "World's Hardest Material". Lonsdaleite challenges that.

Diamond is the solid form of the element carbon. Diamond's atoms are arranged in a crystal structure called *diamond cubic*. It's this structure that makes diamond the hardest and most thermally conductive natural material. (These properties are useful in industrial applications, such as on the tips of cutting and polishing tools.)

In 1966, lonsdaleite was successfully synthesized in the laboratory under the conditions in which it was reported; by compressing and heating graphite. Apparently, some of the synthesized mineral had a hardness more in the 7 – 8 range. In 2009, Zicheng Pan and his colleagues at Shanghai Jiao Tong University in China studied a rare natural substance they believed to be harder than traditional diamond. That substance was lonsdaleite. In their lab, Pan's team simulated how lonsdaleite atoms would respond under stress. Their simulations showed that lonsdaleite can stand a whopping 58% more stress than ordinary diamond! So how could both of these results be true? Was lonsdaleite the new "World's Hardest Material", or not?

In 2014, scientists re-examined the Canyon Diablo samples and the laboratory samples. The study seems to settle the longstanding controversy over lonsdaleite. The study showed that the mineral called lonsdaleite is a structurally disordered form of ordinary diamond. "So-called lonsdaleite is actually the long-familiar cubic form of diamond, but it's full of defects," said Peter Nemeth, a former Arizona State University (ASU) visiting researcher. These can occur, he said, due to shock metamorphism, plastic deformation or unequibrated crystal growth. Using advanced electron microscopes, they found new types of diamond twins and nanometer-scale structural complexity which gave rise to features attributed to lonsdaleite.

Peter Buseck, from the University of Bayreuth in Germany, said, "Most crystals have regular repeating structures, much like the bricks in a well-built wall." However, he says interruptions can occur in the regularity resulting in defects.

"Defects are intermixed with the normal diamond structure, just as if the wall had an occasional half-brick or longer brick or row of bricks that's slightly displaced to one side or another," said Buseck.

The results of the 2014 study, which were published in the journal *Nature Communications*, is that lonsdaleite is not a new harder form of diamond, but the same as the regular cubic form of diamond, except that it was subjected to shock or pressure that caused defects within its crystal structure.

Regardless of the controversy, especially if you enjoy crystals for their aesthetic appeal and not so much for the science behind them, lonsdaleite is another way to enjoy diamonds! Lonsdaleite may not be the "World's Hardest Material" anymore, but its status in the jewelry industry is secure. To me, all types of diamonds seem to have a timeless natural beauty and how cool to own a piece of jewelry that showcases a diamond formed by an asteroid! Let's not forget the effects of clever marketing, too: "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend"!

References: <https://en.wikipedia.org/>, "Earth", *New Scientist Daily Newsletter*, 16 February 2009, *The Economic Times*, 25 November 2014





Pebble Pups

**Madison County Senior Center Cafeteria
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville AL**

Cancelled like everything else for April

Whenever we resume, we will continue a four part series on geological processes.

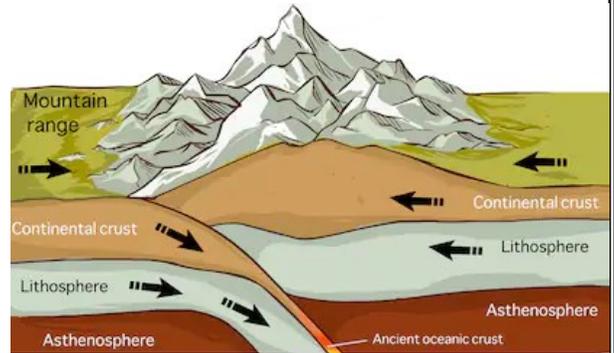
1. Plate Tectonic Theory - Done in Feb
2. **Mountains - April? (March has been postponed)**
3. Plateaus - May
4. Sedimentary Basins - June

I will explain each subject, how each relates to minerals, and how to rockhound each formation. I will explain what can be generally found in each formation. We will meet in the Senior Center Cafeteria at 6:00 on Apr 23rd. Bring your friends.

For more information, contact

Brian Burgess at bburgess771@gmail.com 256-479-2993

or Bill Friday bill.friday@earthlink.net 256-527-8227



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GeoSciences

Like all the rest of the world, particularly Senior Center activities for April are cancelled.

But we should be back in business for a GeoSciences meeting on Thursday May 14.

Tom Burleson of the Von Braun Astronomical Society has offered to present a program on Meteorites, elaboration to be provided later, but he was encouraged to dig deep and take his time.





Dixie Mineral Council Field Trips

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc



The Friendly Federation - Founded in 1976 to serve
DMC Program of the SFMS Field Trip Committee
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An Official Field Trip of the Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society (Florence, MS) (HOST)
An Official Field Trip of the Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society

Hammett Gravel Pit Redwood, Mississippi
Saturday, May 30, 2020 Meet 7:45 a.m. Central Daylight Time
LIMITED to 80 Attendees Registration Required

NOTE: DMC field trips will continue to be planned and scheduled, but may be cancelled or rescheduled pending COVID-19 status. If there are changes to a trip, all contacts listed for DMC member clubs will be notified via email as soon as possible. The DMC trip schedule page on the SFMS website (<http://www.amfed.org/sfms/dmc/dixie-proposed-ft.htm>) will be updated with the current status of trips. **Lori Carter, DMC Coordinator.**

TRIP: This site is an active gravel pit producing sand and gravel for industries and has igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks. Citronella gravel is mined from a layer 40 feet below Ice Age loess soil.

COLLECTING: Expect to find agates, coral and other fossils, geodes, chunks of petrified wood, and Sioux quartzite as we hunt around and on piles of gravel.

BRING: Bring a bucket, bag, or backpack for collecting as you climb on the gravel piles. A spray water bottle is helpful to clean off the red sand and dirt. Wear close-toed shoes to protect feet. If you need ankle support, wear hiking boots. Bring gloves, hat, sunglasses, bug spray, sunscreen, and a chair. If you have allergies or require medication, please bring your medication. Expect heat and humidity. Wear lightweight, loose fitting clothing and a light-colored, wide-brimmed hat if possible. Bring snacks and plenty of water, sports drinks, and/or non-alcoholic beverages. Pack a lunch if you expect to stay until the 2 p.m. departure time.

SITE REQUIREMENTS: Participants must stay off equipment, out of ponds, and away from loess walls.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS: This is a remote area and there will be little or no cell phone reception. We will not park close to the gravel piles. Unless you are very selective, you will make multiple trips to your auto to deposit your finds to avoid potential injury. Footing on the gravel piles can be tricky. People who have stability issues should stay at the bottom of the gravel piles. It will still be good hunting. Walking and digging on steep slopes can lead to slides; be aware that gravel slides are possible. Stay away from rock piles against the pond edges.

EXPECT HIGH TEMPERATURES AND HUMIDITY. High humidity can make it more uncomfortable and increase the chance of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. It will be important to drink plenty of fluids. Don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink. Take water breaks every 20 minutes. There will be no shade in the gravel pit except man-made shade

REGISTRATION: Limited to 80 participants. Email registration preferred; see contact information below. If the attendee limit is reached, a waiting list will be established. Should plans change after registration confirmation is received, please cancel so another person can attend.

CHILDREN: Children are allowed if a club member. Adult supervision is required at all times. Children may not throw rocks or run at the site, especially on the gravel piles. Care should be taken when around the ponds. No climbing on equipment is allowed **PETS:** No pets allowed

FACILITIES: No stores or facilities are close to the collecting site. A portable toilet will be on the site. At the meeting place, there will be drinks, snacks, some prepared breakfast/lunch food items, and restrooms.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The meeting place is between Vicksburg and Jackson, Mississippi. Vicksburg is a historical area with casinos, hotels, and restaurants (I-20 Exits 1 to 5). If you would prefer to stay in the Jackson area, there are a variety of hotels and restaurants available at I-20 Exit 48 (Pearl) or I-20 Exit 36 (Clinton). Clinton will be the closest to meeting place.

DIRECTIONS AND WHERE TO MEET: Meeting location and directions will be provided after registration to those on the attendee list

CONTACT: Registration: Email preferred: fieldtrips@missgems.org Reference **DMC Field Trip** in subject line. Provide club affiliation and a contact phone number. Those who register via email will receive a confirmation reply with directions to meeting place. Although email registration is preferred, you may also call Greg Britt - 601-278-3997 (mobile). to register Day of Trip Contact: Greg Britt - 601-278-3997

April Birthdays

2 Eric Life-Putnam	20 Jan Edmunds
4 Khezekiah Bellamy	20 Wendy Lear
4 Ann Deikman	21 Sam Holliday
4 Ryan McNeal	22 Shrail Heinrich
4 Julia Morton	22 Alex McCormick
5 Autumn Posta	23 Bill Friday
6 Jacob Morton	24 Mark Dexheimer
9 Nova Hilley	25 Brandon Schroeder
11 Isabel Leon y Leon	26 Missy Baggett
11 Leslie Malakowsky	27 Don Aldridge
11 Anita Owen	28 Billy Todd
17 Bill Sweetman	29 Sam DuPre'
18 Alex Forscher	29 Susanna DuPre'
19 Thelia DeMoor	30 Shirley Bruce
19 Bill Lokken	30 Jane Detwiler Sandy Herwig

Anniversaries

- 6 Iven Holt
- 7 Joe & Sherrie Bonin
- 8 Mike & Myra Soroczak



April
Diamond

May Birthdays

3 Jim Hanes	17 Jeff Finckenor
5 Myra Soroczak	22 Mike Chivers
6 Phil Lester	25 Maureen Priddy
9 Laura Bath	26 Trudie Murphy
13 Laurie Cantrell	27 Chris Kalange
14 Joe Bonin	29 Ruth Finckenor
16 Emily Lear	30 Mike Bowman
16 Mike Curran	30 Jim Treadway
16 Vicki Van Valkenburgh	31 Raymond Tanner

Anniversaries

- 6 John & Julie McCullough
- 17 Gerdy & David Wyatt
- 18 Chelsey Perry
- 18 Mike & Anne Wesley
- 29 Norm & Sandy Ballas
- 29 David & Diana O'Dell



May
Emerald

The Lapidary Lab will be closed until further notice

? 2020 - Senior Center Lapidary Lab Schedule

To use lapidary equipment, you must be certified unless a licensed instructor is present
currently: Bill Friday, Isabel Leon y Leon & Michael Cape

<u>Monday</u>	7:30am-4:30pm	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified Seniors & HGMS age 60+
	6:00pm-9:00pm	Open Metal Smithing - Only certified HGMS 18+
<u>Tuesday</u>	7:30am-9:00am	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified Seniors & HGMS 60+
	9:00am—Noon	Silver Jewelry - Ron West, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	Noon -3:00 pm	Silver Jewelry - Terry Clarke, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	3:00pm-4:30 pm	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified Seniors & HGMS 60+
	6:00pm-9:00pm	Open Lapidary - Only certified HGMS 18+
<u>Wednesday</u>	7:30am-4:30 pm	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified Seniors & HGMS 60+
	6:00pm-9:00pm	Open Lapidary - Only certified HGMS 18+
	6:00pm-9:00pm	Open Jewelry - Only certified HGMS
<u>Thursday</u>	7:30am-9:00am	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified Seniors & HGMS 60+
	9:00am-11:30am	Silver Jewelry - Ron West, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	Noon-3:00pm	Wood Carving - Copeland, Instructor - Seniors & HGMS 60+
	3:00pm-4:30 pm	Open Lab: Lapidary -certified Seniors & HGMS 60+
	5:30pm-9:00pm	Metal Smithing & Jewelry Classes— Only certified HGMS 18+
<u>Friday</u>	7:30am-12:00am	Open Lab: Lapidary - certified Seniors & HGMS 60+

2020 HUNTSVILLE GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

President- Mike Harrison - william.m.harrison@boeing.com
 Vice President- Isabel Leon y Leon- isabel.leonyleon@gmail.com
 Recording Secretary: Ruth Kemper- bob_kemper@yahoo.com
 Treasurer: Clara Goode, 256-883-9194 - claragoode1@comcast.net
 Newsletter Editor: Bill Friday - 256-527-8227 - bill.friday@earthlink.net
 Directors at Large:
 Gene Powers - genepowersgddm@gmail.com
 Michael Soroczak- soroczak@yahoo.com
 Les Bartel - lester.bartel@gmail.com
 Ex Officio - bill.friday@earthlink.net

2020 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership: Bill Friday— 256-527-8227 bill.friday@earthlink.net 2508 Excalibur Dr. Huntsville AL 35803	Property: Michael Cape macape@knology.net
Publicity: Bob Kemper bob_kemper@yahoo.com	Program Chair—Mike Harrison william.m.harrison@boeing.com
Webpage: Leslie Malakowsky, lmalakowsky@gmail.com	Show Chair: Tony Smith, 256-603-3095. tsmith@erc-incorporated.com
Auction Chair: Shelley Curran curranshelley1@gmail.com	Show Vendor Chair: Lowell Zoller, 256-534-8803 Lzol@comcast.net
Field Trips: Open	Show Volunteer Chair: Open
Rocket City Jewelers: Leslie Malakowsky 256) 755-0479 lmalakowsky@gmail.com	Show Publicity Chair - Tony Smith tsmith@erc-incorporated.com
Hospitality: Caryl Nixon 256-426-5061 caryl.nixon@outlook.com	Show Treasurer: Clara Goode, 256-883-9194 clarag1964@gmail.com
Mineral ID: Michael Soroczak soroczak@yahoo.com (William Holland offers a class for this)	

PURPOSE OF THE SOCIETY: The Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society is a non-profit educational organization for people interested in mineralogy, geology, paleontology, and related lapidary arts. Its primary purpose is the education of the members and the general public in these areas. This purpose is accomplished through programs, shows, lectures to school children and organizations, and exchange of rocks, minerals, artifacts, and newsletters.

DUES: Annual dues are \$15.00 per person, \$20.00 per family, and are due on January 1st of each year

Membership Applications may be found at our webpage www.Huntsvillegms.org, at meetings, or the lab

MEETING PLACE: Huntsville/Madison County Senior Center, 2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL at 6:30pm.

DATE: Fourth Tuesday of the month except for March Auction, June picnic, Christmas Dinner and major holidays.

**The Society is affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies ,
the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, and the Dixie Mineral Council**

Federation Newsletters:

SFMS: www.amfed.org/sfms/lodestar_newsletter.html

AFMS: www.amfed.org/news/default.htm

DMC: http://www.amfed.org/sfms/_dmc/dmc.htm



2020 CALENDAR

Annual Rock Auction Fundraiser, **Postponed till further notice**

Jaycees Bldg, 2180 Airport Rd, Huntsville AL

26 May '20 Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm

20 Jun '20 Annual HGMS Picnic, Monte Sano State Park
Saturday, Pavilion 1, 9:00 till 2:00

28 Jul '20 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm

25 Aug '20 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm

22 Sep '20 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm

9-11 Oct '20 HGMS Fall Show,
Jaycees Bldg, 2180 Airport Rd, Huntsville AL

27 Oct '20 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm

24 Nov '20 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm

8 Dec '20 - Annual HGMS Christmas Dinner - place to be determined

26 Jan '21 Regular HG&MS Meeting, Madison County Senior Center,
2200 Drake Ave, Huntsville, AL 6:30pm

**Deadline for Next Newsletter
May 16, 2020**

**Dated material
Do not delay**

Rocket City Rocks & Gems
Bill Friday, Editor
2508 Excaltibur Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35803
April 2020