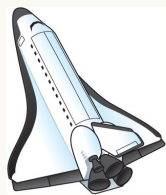


# ROCKET CITY ROCKS & GEMS



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

Volume 52 No. 09

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

September 2020

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## September Meeting & Fall Show

### CANCELLED- Oh, How Long!?

The Virus Lingers On, but the restoration of the activities in the new Gem & Mineral Education Center is nearly complete. We have begun limited opening of activities. Open House Soon.  
**Metals, RCJ, Lapidary, GeoSciences, Pups**



[www.huntsvillegms.org/](http://www.huntsvillegms.org/) - [www.facebook.com/HuntsvilleGMS](https://www.facebook.com/HuntsvilleGMS) -



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Hello HGMS Membership!

I am sad to announce that the board of directors felt they had no choice but to cancel the annual October show. We have been exploring our options for a couple of months now and it came down to the economics of a restricted vendor and activities floor space. Without going into the details, it was the only choice we felt we could make. Also, we will NOT be having our September meeting because of the same restrictions that caused the show cancellation. But I have good news! The lapidary lab, the metals group and Rocket City Jewelers have actively been working to get their areas up and running and plan on resuming operations soon! Look for more information on when and how to participate in this newsletter!

Your humble Prez, Mike Harrison

## **Annual Gem, Jewelry & Mineral Show** Cancelled for this Year

The HGMS Board and Committee Chairmen met last week to discuss the practicality of hosting our Fall Show on the second weekend in October, recognizing the need for the income for the vendors and a promise to give them advance notice incase of cancellation, the need for the income for the HGMS, and the enthusiasm of the buying public for the items for sale by our array of vendors, we had to also take into account the Virus.

The Governor's continuation of the Virus Related Restrictions on activities, including particularly the requirement of maintaining 6' distance between patrons, would have required the Fall Show to space the vendor's booths 18' apart, seriously reducing the number of booths which could be fit inside the Jaycees building and making it difficult for patrons to view the merchandise. Billboard and Radio Advertising had already been cancelled due to deadlines for cutoff in advance of the event in order to receive refunds of the payments. The Board members therefore voted unanimously to cancel this year's Show.

The decision had to be made in early September. If the restrictions are lifted in early October, there would only be nine days prior to the show do all advertising, recruit workers, prepare our own materials and equipment for use in the Show.

### **Auction Update**

Due to the cancellation of our March auction fundraiser, and subsequent loss of revenue for the club, it's been decided to take the auction on line. After much research I've chosen a platform designed specifically for non profits. It features real time bidding from any device. We hope to go live in October. Info on how to bid and a link to the site will follow in next months newsletter. Be ready to shop!

Shelley

### **Official Name of the New HGMS Facility**

Bob Kemper conducted a contest in June to find a name for our newly renovated home in the old Grissom High Field House. A dozen names were submitted, and then sent back out to the membership. Pat Allen's suggested name got the most votes, so the place is now officially: Congratulations Pat.

**The Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center.**

### Progress at the new Gem & Mineral Education Center

Work crews have been regularly gathering at the Center to complete the saw and arbor benches, work tables for Metals and Rocket City Jewelers, and shelves for the storage rooms. There is still work left to finish before the Center opens fully in early October, and we should be ready then for an OPEN HOUSE. We have been given permission to work in the facility as long as we observe distance, masks, and sanitizing.

In the Lapidary Lab, we did a shakedown checkout with the members who have been helping with the restoration. After the saws were pressure washed, we re-loaded them with water mixed with a lapidary grade surfactant called LubeCool, but it failed miserably in cutting agates. So the oil is back in all of the automatic saws and they again work fine. One saw had a stripped cross feed screw and brass nut under the vice, which were replaced with new ones from Highland Park. Most of the saw shaft bearings have gotten noisy, so we purchased a set of new ones, and one pair was installed. Quiet!! The others will be replaced soon. Several of the arbor water hoses were leaking and all of those have been fixed. The sediment tank and secondary filter tank are now working, with a homemade cheese cloth filter inserted. Work has begun on the locker cabinet. The holes have been cut in the front wall, but the main cabinet and all the doors are yet to be attached. Cameras are coming soon, and the secure access system is out for bids.

Metal Smithing and Rocket City Jewelers have met twice and their updated schedules are included below.



New work tables for the Metals Room



Trying out the grind/polish arbors





## Metal Smithing/Silver Group by Kathy Bowman & Shelley Curran

There has been a lot of progress setting up the Metalsmithing room over the past few months. We have added some new equipment now that we have the additional space. We still have some details to finish but it shouldn't be too long before we are open for work sessions. We are working on the permanent benches but in the meantime we have some sturdy individual tables to use.



Unfortunately because of Covid 19 we will need to make some changes:

Masks will be required.

If you are ill or running a fever you will be asked to leave.

Work tables will be spaced 6 feet apart.

Work Sessions will be limited to 6 students. You may have to sign up for a specific day. This will have to be determined later.

Class size will be limited to 5 students per session. **Classes will be offered in 2 sessions: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month and the following Monday.** Because space per session is limited *you must sign up for a particular day as part of class registration.* We will do all we can to accommodate your request, but you might be asked to change the day if too many people request the same session. Last minute changes need to be cleared with an instructor so we stay within the limits.

Hopefully there will be a vaccine next year and we can go back to our full capacity of 10 students and 2 instructors. It is a big space and we have room to accommodate that many people without crowding.

## Tentative Next Project Class, Thursday, October 1 and Monday, October 5 : Setting a Cabochon

IMPORTANT! YOU MUST PRE-REGISTER FOR CLASSES BECAUSE OF THE LIMIT ON THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS. YOU WILL NOT BE ASSURED A SEAT IN THE CLASS IF YOU SHOW UP AT THE DOOR!

To register for this class send email to [HGMS@wildivystudio.com](mailto:HGMS@wildivystudio.com). Let us know what day you *prefer* to attend. If you can come either day, indicate that as well so we know you will be able to change days if we need to balance the number in the class. If the date should change those who sign up for the class will be notified.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone again!

**Certification Classes:** We hope to resume certifications on a one to three person basis in January. If you are interested in scheduling Metalsmithing Certification please send your name and contact information (name, email address, and phone number) to [HGMS@wildivystudio.com](mailto:HGMS@wildivystudio.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.

### Volunteer Positions \*

Class Instructors:

Kathy Bowman

Shelley Curran

Toolbox Sign-outs

CG Lester

Inventory Manager

**Opening**

Store Manager

**Opening**

Kit Manager

Shelley Curran

Webpage & Social Media Management

Kathy Bowman

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

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

Hi Everyone! There's a lot to report about in this issue!

**Our First Two Meetings**

After months of meeting by video chatting via Zoom, we met for the **first time in person** in our new room at the new HGMS Education Center on **Wed, September 2<sup>nd</sup>**! Even though many of our group were reluctant or unable to attend, 4 of us braved it and 2 more folks stopped by to visit. There was a feeling of informal open house as members of Lapidary and Metalsmithing were also in the building! We ate dinner, shared snacks, and visited the other groups' "digs" while catching up with one of our favorite projects, the Double Drilled Bead & Byzantine bracelet! We also started looking at pictures of projects we might want to make in the future. On **Wed, September 9<sup>th</sup>**, we had our first "Try It" project – a pair of bead-wrapped earrings. Becky and I used the work benches for the first time hammering the earring wires!

**Our New Room**

We're working on the finishing touches to our room, and it's coming together nicely! Many thanks to Judy & Jerry Osmundson and Theresa & Mike Chivers who installed the kitchen area plumbing, sink and cabinets, and installed the work benches that Judy made, and to Nannette Schwartz who provided moral support. Theresa and Mike also found (and refurbed) 2 more stools for the work benches (in addition to the stools that Judy found and refurbed) and a lovely glass shelf unit for our new attendance book and incidentals. Thanks also to Mike Chivers who completed the plumbing in the kitchen area in time for our first meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup>! We're also thinking about creature comforts like a coat rack and posters or art to decorate the walls! (Our new chairs are really comfortable! You've got to come try them!) A few weeks ago, I emptied our storage cubby holes in the Paint Room at the Sr. Cntr. and brought everything home where I've been busy conducting a thorough inventory of our tools and supplies. So far, the tools inventory is complete. I'll share more details about tools and storage at our meetings.

**Our Schedule**

We're going to continue our schedule of classes on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesdays (non-chainmaille projects) and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays (chainmaille projects) of the month from 6p – 9p, and Make Up time (for working on unfinished projects) and "Try It" projects (for trying different techniques in small projects) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month from 2p – 5p. The new meeting time allows us to gather in the daylight hours and to make it home before dark while avoiding the worst of rush hour traffic. If we like this arrangement, we'll continue the 2p – 5p meeting time (on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays only) throughout the Winter months.

**Upcoming Schedule**

**Sep 16:** Hexapetalon Rivoli Pendant. Bring 2prs pliers (preferably Xuron) for working with jump rings. Kit \$1.25. **RSVP to Theresa ASAP (256) 509-0406.**

**Sep 23:** Try It: Beaded Paddle Earrings/Pendant, Make Up CM Samples #3 (Inv Rnd on Leather)

**Sep 30:** Bonus Project (TBA)

**Oct 7:** Basket Weave Bracelet w/stone or small cab

**Oct 14:** Try It: Links, Awareness Earrings

**Important:** The **HGMS Education Center is located at 7901 Bailey Cove Road SE, Huntsville.** Enter the South parking lot off Bailey Cove Road SE, drive through the lot to the Education Center (long narrow building) at the back, turn left, and park directly opposite the building. Please enter the double glass doors on the West side of the building.

Please be aware that the doors will be unlocked for the first hour. After that, the doors will be locked, and you will need to call Judy (205-541-7207) to let you in.

**(Continued Next Page)**



## Rocket City Jewelers (Continued)

### 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 and Theresa Chivers (backup)

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.**

## Pebble Pups

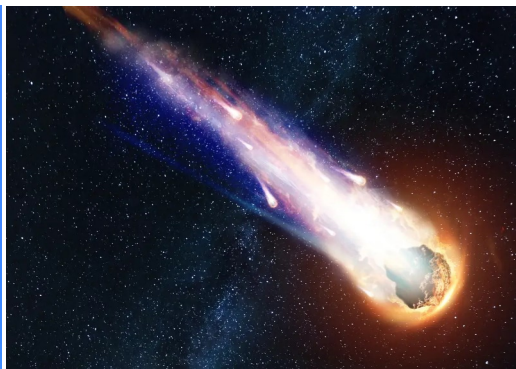
**Current plans are to re-start the Pebble Pups programs in October, allowing the virus problem to settle out further.** We will meet in the new Gem & Mineral Education Center at the old Grissom High facility at 6:00 on October 22. Bring your friends. For more information, contact Bill Friday [bill.friday@earthlink.net](mailto:bill.friday@earthlink.net) 256-527-8227



## GeoSciences

**Like all the rest of the world, particularly Senior Center activities through August are cancelled. But we should be back in business for a GeoSciences meeting in September**

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





## Mineral of the Month – Charoite *By Leslie A. Malakowsky*

One of my favorite colors is purple, so when I ran across a charoite cabochon many years ago in a jewelry supply store here in Huntsville, I was thrilled! Although skeptical that the cab's lovely lavender color was natural, I bought it anyway, and I was happy to learn, after doing some research, that it's a naturally occurring mineral!

Charoite is a rare potassium silicate mineral with the formula  $K(Ca,Na)_2Si_4O_{10}(OH,F) \cdot H_2O$ . It's a component of the potassium feldspar metasomatic rocks (metamorphic rocks that have undergone chemical alteration by hydrothermal fluids) found in only one location in the world: the confluence of the Chara River (for which the mineral was named) and the Tokko River in the Tokko River Basin, Siberia, Russia. It's at that location where a syenite (a coarse-grained intrusive igneous rock similar to granite but low in quartz) of the Murunskii Massif (an exposed portion of shield rock) intruded into and altered local limestone deposits producing metasomatic rocks.



Charoite was reportedly first discovered in the 1940s, but it was unknown to most of the world until it was described in 1978. Some mineralogists believe that its drab opaque appearance in the field may have contributed to its late recognition. (Since its discovery in Siberia, charoite has also been discovered in southern India.) Minerals associated with charoite include aegirine, quartz, pectolite, and galena.

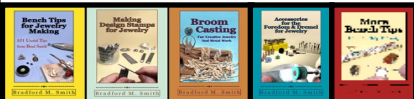
Charoite ranges in color from translucent lavender, violet, lilac, purple, and light brown with a vitreous, silky, or pearly luster. The color variations are due to the presence of impurities such as aluminum, iron, manganese, strontium, and barium. It's a fairly hard mineral ranging from 5 (apatite) to 6 (feldspar) on Mohs scale. Its crystal habit is massive, and it has an unusual swirling, fibrous, and sometimes chatoyant appearance. (In mineralogy, chatoyance is an optical effect resulting from the fibrous nature of a mineral or from fibrous inclusions within a mineral. The term was coined from the French "œil de chat", meaning "cat's eye".) These features, along with its incredible color, led some people to think at first that charoite was a synthetic or artificially enhanced mineral.

Like the mineral sugilite (*Rocket City Rocks & Gems*, May 2019), charoite's hardness, pearly luster, and beautiful color make it an ideal mineral for lapidary and jewelry making.

References: [wikipedia.org](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charoite), [mindat.org](https://www.mindat.org/min-10000.html)

### Brad's Bench Tips

"Bench Tips for Jewelry Making" and "Broom Casting for Creative Jewelry" are available on Amazon [www.BradSmithJewelry.com](https://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>



### RAISING A CABOCHON

When a cabochon sits too low in a bezel, the bezel can hide a lot of the stone. The solution is to either sand down the bezel height or boost up the stone. But if you choose to raise it up, the question is what is the best material to use?

I was taught to use fine sawdust but now think that might be a problem when used in rings. I reason that rings will frequently get wet, which would cause the sawdust to swell in size and push the stone against the bezel. Then when the sawdust dries out, the stone would be a little loose.

In any case, I now prefer to insert a flat sheet to boost up my stones. It can be a scrap of metal or some plastic from product packaging or old credit cards. In either case, just cut a piece to loosely fit into the bezel and drop in the stone (with some dental floss) to check its height.

### TRANSPARENT CABS

When bezel setting a transparent cabochon in silver, I usually cut out the back of the bezel to allow background light to show off the colors and patterns in the stone. If this is not possible or appropriate, I worry that the silver bezel will tarnish under the stone and will ruin its brilliance. What to do?

My solution is one extra step before setting the stone. I place a piece of thin silver Mylar plastic under the stone to act as a mirror that will never tarnish. Mylar is readily available in craft and gift wrap stores, or in a pinch from a party balloon supplier. You may even want to experiment with using colored or patterned Mylar (i.e. diffraction pattern) under some stones.

## September Birthdays

1 Wayne Hastings	14 Larry Augsburger
3 Lola Flippo	14 J. P. McCullough
3 Gerdy Wyatt	14 Sheila Tesh
3 Laurel Rico	15 Spencer Myrick
4 Valerie Tripp	16 Charlie Willhoite
6 Ivey Cook	18 Billie Couch
7 Mike Harrison	18 Bobby Couch
8 David Lehner	18 Samantha Lindberg
10 Marie Aldridge	19 Mitzi Cartee
12 Rodney Lane	20 Xavier Walley
13 Mark Falkenberg	21 Laura Carroll
	23 Heidi Causey

## Anniversaries

1 Frank & Shelley Curran  
 26 Debbie Deering  
 26 Bill & Rita Friday  
 29 Mike & Theresa Chivers  
 Bruce & Allison Kowalczyk



September  
Sapphire

## October Birthdays

1 Karen Lester	18 James Lowery
2 Brian Hastings	20 Sam Tumminello
3 Theresa Chivers	21 Jeannie Green
5 Parker Holliday	22 Grady Harmon
7 Mark King	22 Norman Johnson
7 Christopher Trumble	26 Maurice Thompson
8 Clark Harmon	27 Jake Walters
10 Bonnie Treadway	28 Mary Herren
11 Diana Nelms	30 David Nixon
16 Rhonda Hall	30 Madison Phillips
	31 Colton Gulliver

## Anniversaries

9 Bill & Joyce Walters  
 24 Leslie Malakowsky  
 29 Daniel & Susan Hessler



October  
Tourmaline

**The Lapidary Lab will be only limited open until further notice**

### Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center Schedule

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

**The lapidary equipment is reassembled and operational but still in the shakedown stage. But until the virus restrictions are relaxed, it is not practical to post a schedule. Current plans are to maintain the open lab for all qualified members ages 18+ on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings, starting October 6th.**

**Daytime access for qualified members is still being worked out as we finalize the building opening times and secure access protocol.**

**The biggest change from previous scheduling at the Senior Center is that now qualified members ages 18+ will be able to use the equipment during the daytime.**



## 2020 HUNTSVILLE GEM &amp; MINERAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

President- Mike Harrison - [william.m.harrison@boeing.com](mailto:william.m.harrison@boeing.com)Vice President- Isabel Leon y Leon- [isabel.leonyleon@gmail.com](mailto:isabel.leonyleon@gmail.com)Recording Secretary: Ruth Kemper- [bob\\_kemper@yahoo.com](mailto:bob_kemper@yahoo.com)Treasurer: Clara Goode, 256-883-9194 - [claragoode1@comcast.net](mailto:claragoode1@comcast.net)Newsletter Editor: Bill Friday - 256-527-8227 - [bill.friday@earthlink.net](mailto:bill.friday@earthlink.net)

Directors at Large:

Gene Powers - [genepowersgddm@gmail.com](mailto:genepowersgddm@gmail.com)Michael Soroczak- [soroczak@yahoo.com](mailto:soroczak@yahoo.com)Les Bartel - [lester.bartel@gmail.com](mailto:lester.bartel@gmail.com)Ex Officio - [bill.friday@earthlink.net](mailto:bill.friday@earthlink.net)

## 2020 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership: Bill Friday— 256-527-8227

[bill.friday@earthlink.net](mailto:bill.friday@earthlink.net)

2508 Excalibur Dr. Huntsville AL 35803

Publicity: Bob Kemper

[bob\\_kemper@yahoo.com](mailto:bob_kemper@yahoo.com)

Webpage: Leslie Malakowsky,

[lmalakowsky@gmail.com](mailto:lmalakowsky@gmail.com)

Auction Chair: Shelley Curran

[curranshelley1@gmail.com](mailto:curranshelley1@gmail.com)

Field Trips: Open

Rocket City Jewelers: Leslie Malakowsky

256) 755-0479 [lmalakowsky@gmail.com](mailto:lmalakowsky@gmail.com)

Hospitality: Caryl Nixon 256-426-5061

[caryl.nixon@outlook.com](mailto:caryl.nixon@outlook.com)

Mineral ID: Michael Soroczak

[soroczak@yahoo.com](mailto:soroczak@yahoo.com)

(William Holland offers a class for this)

Property: Michael Cape

[macape@knology.net](mailto:macape@knology.net)

Program Chair—Mike Harrison

[william.m.harrison@boeing.com](mailto:william.m.harrison@boeing.com)

Show Chair: Tony Smith, 256-603-3095.

[tsmith@erc-incorporated.com](mailto:tsmith@erc-incorporated.com)

Show Vendor Chair: Lowell Zoller, 256-534-8803

[Lzol@comcast.net](mailto:Lzol@comcast.net)

Show Volunteer Chair: Theresa Chivers, 256-837-6819

[wolfson929@gmail.com](mailto:wolfson929@gmail.com)

Show Publicity Chair - Tony Smith

[tsmith@erc-incorporated.com](mailto:tsmith@erc-incorporated.com)

Show Treasurer: Clara Goode, 256-883-9194

[clarag1964@gmail.com](mailto:clarag1964@gmail.com)

**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](http://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](http://www.amfed.org/sfms/lodestar_newsletter.html)

**AFMS:** [www.amfed.org/news/default.htm](http://www.amfed.org/news/default.htm)

**DMC:** [http://www.amfed.org/sfms/\\_dmc/dmc.htm](http://www.amfed.org/sfms/_dmc/dmc.htm)



## 2020-21 CALENDAR

22 Sep '20 - Regular HGMS Meeting, **Cancelled**

9-11 Oct '20 **HGMS Fall Show, Cancelled**

J

27 Oct '20 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center

7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

24 Nov '20 - Regular HG&MS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center

7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

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

26 Jan '21 Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center

7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

23 Feb '21 Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center

7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

27 Mar '21 - Annual HGMS Fundraising Auction

Jaycees Bldg, 2180 Airport Rd, Huntsville AL

27 Apr '21 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center

7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

<p>Deadline for Next Newsletter October 18, 2020</p>
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**Dated material  
Do not delay**

September 2020

Huntsville, AL 35803  
2508 Excaltibur Dr.  
Bill Friday, Editor

Rocket City Rocks & Gems