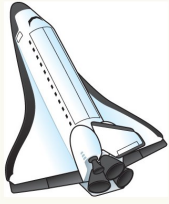


# ROCKET CITY ROCKS & GEMS



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

Volume 55 No. 9

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

September 2023

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Minutes of the Aug Meeting .....	2
Membership Dues Reminder .....	2
Rocket City Jewelers .....	3
Metalsmithing Corner .....	4
Madison Street Fair .....	4
Pebble Pups .....	5
Meeting Prize .....	6
VBAS Astronomy Day .....	6
Mineral of the Month .....	7
DMC Field Trips .....	8,9
Sep/Oct Birthdays/ Anniversaries..	10
Activity Schedule.....	10
Executive Board & Committees.....	11
Calendar.....	12

**HGMS Sep 26th Meeting, 6:00 gather, 6:30 business Preparation & Planning for the Oct 13-15 Fall Show Floor Mark Wed 11th, Vendor & HGMS Setup Thu 12th Please attend and find a place to help with the Activities**



**There will also be an interesting short mystery program  
You will like it**

**Web Page - [www.huntsvillegms.org/](http://www.huntsvillegms.org/) email - [hsvgems@gmail.com](mailto:hsvgems@gmail.com)**



Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society (HGMS) 2023. Reprinting Rights are granted for all material (except for minutes of the meeting and copyrighted articles) to any organization officially affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) or Southeastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies (SFMS), provided credit is given to the author, the original publication, and this newsletter.

## Minutes of the August 23 Membership Meeting - James Yack, Recording Secretary

Bill Friday is presiding. Welcome new members, James Mallonee, from Virginia, was also in Montgomery club. Brianna Appleton is a first timer at the meeting but comes to lapidary. First timers please grab a rock from the door prize table. Jessica Galloway with Montgomery club is visiting with her father. Please feel free to purchase Jim Lacefield's book, Lost Worlds in Alabama Rocks, \$30.

There were 37 in attendance.

Treasurers report, \$12,305 in account. Please turn in any requests for spending.

Eric with the Von Braun Astronomical Society will meet this Sat Aug 26, 7:30 and Sat, Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>.

HGMS will provide fossils and minerals in support of Astronomy, Geology, and Time Program Birmingham is having a club show Labor Day weekend. Sept 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Metalsmithing has been holding certification classes. You must be certified to participate in most classes.

Please RSVP for all classes and check your newsletter for upcoming events.

Rocket City Jewelers. Please RSVP for all classes as they fill up fast. You do not need to be certified to participate in RCJ projects. Please check the newsletter for upcoming classes.

Pebble Pups meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month. This month will be fluorescent minerals. Last month was fossil identification. Mike Harrison with Pebble pups will watch the Kid's Area at the Fall Show and needs volunteers to help.

All areas of the show need more volunteers. We need Chairs for many of the positions in order to recruit helpers. Bill is chairing display cases and provided some pictures of last year's displays. All volunteers should be wearing bright RED. Judy is taking orders on vests for use by Members. Anthony went over some pricing for patches and other merchandise, we will think about.

The William Holland scholarship from the club will be called at the November meeting. Please send a message to Shelley with metalsmithing. Please look at what they have to offer. They will start registering classes for next year in December. William Holland school will also offer scholarships, please go online and apply with them as well.

2024 Membership dues will be due and collectible for members at the annual show. We are trying to keep all active members on the books and cancelling memberships that are not up to date by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. This way we will not have to pay SFMS insurance on non-active members.

## Our Fall Gem Jewelry & Mineral Show is now only one (1) month away.

We are recruiting Activity Leaders at the September Meeting, and these are recruiting helpers for all Show scheduled times.

Please consider signing up for one of these opportunities and let Bill Friday know your plans.

**Reminder** — Membership Dues will become **due** starting at the Show, and the cutoff will be Dec 31.

This change is put in place to make it easier and less costly for us to maintain our association with the

Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, which among other benefits is how we get to attend Dixie Mineral Council Field Trips and our Insurance Coverage.

Those fees are based on membership as of Dec 31.

Thanks Theresa Chivers

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










## Rocket City Jewelers (RCJ) News

September 2023

By Leslie Malakowsky

Hello jewelry makers! RCJ is open to all HGMS members 16 and older. All skill levels are welcome! We've started taking signups for 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter classes. **Please arrive early so we can start on time.** **Note:** RCJ will have a display case at the October 13 – 15<sup>th</sup> show. All RCJ members are invited to contribute to the display. Please bring your contributions to RCJ meetings beginning September 20th.

### 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Classes:

10/4/23 marathon 2-5p, 6-9p	10/18/23 6-9p 10/25/23 2-5p	11/1/23 6-9p 11/8/23 2-5p	11/15/23 6-9p 11/29/23 2-5p	12/6/2023 MakeUp Marathon
Cold Forge Wire Wrap \$5.00	LoveKnot in bronze (Forever weave) \$5.00	Twisted Metal Earrings \$5.00	Enchantress options \$5.00	Please sign up for this DAY
				
BYO Rocks - if you have them. Larger natural beads like the Ocean Jasper above work well.		BYO Beads if desired	chain will be available for this option	
			Enchantress with or without a bead.	

**Oct 4: 2 – 5p and 6 – 9p. Cold Forge Wire Wrap Marathon.** Tools will be provided.

**Oct 18: 6 – 9p/Oct 25: 2 – 5p: LoveKnot (Forever) Chainmaille Bracelet.** Make a bracelet in the LoveKnot weave using bronze jump rings. Bring 2 pairs of flat nose pliers. You can add a heart charm to your bracelet. Tools for personalizing your heart will be provided.

**Nov 1: 6 – 9p/Nov 8: 2 – 5p: Twisted Metal Earrings.** Make various styles of earrings in copper and nickel. Bring your own beads, if desired. Tools will be provided.

**Nov 15: 6 – 9p/Nov 29: 2 – 5p: Enchantress Earrings.** Make a pair of earrings in the Enchantress weave. Bring your own beads, if desired. Bring flat nose pliers (2 pairs), round nose pliers, and cutters.

**Dec 6: 2 – 5p and 6 – 9p. Make Up Marathon.** You must sign up in advance.

### Meeting Times/Reservations:

We meet for Classes from 6p – 9p on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays.

We meet for Classes and Make Up from 2p – 5p on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays.

We meet for Make Up only from 2p – 5p on 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays.

The front doors will be unlocked for the first hour. After that, call Judy or Theresa to let you in. Our classroom holds 16-20 students. Overflow may carry over to Make Up days. To sign up for a class, please email Theresa Chivers **a month before class** at: [rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com](mailto:rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com). Include your name, contact info, and class(es) you want. **Note:** When you sign up for a class, you are responsible for the cost of that class and for attending. We send out texts and/or emails often. A reply confirming your attendance is required.



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

OCTOBER/ NOVEMBER METALS PROJECT.

Oct. 2nd and 5th, please note the schedule change due to the Show. This is not a beginner class



You will design a panel bracelet in October and fabricate your design in November. We'll be using the acetylene torch. Some of the pieces will be small and fiddly, but very doable with some patience.

October Class. - 2nd and 5th

We'll provide a worksheet and templates to get you started. The example in the photo has been purposely left blank, unadorned. This is your starting point. You'll need your imagination to come up with design elements for the panels. Things to consider along the way are design viability, wearability, cohesion of the elements, materials and cost. Questions will be answered and advice given during our regular open studio hours.

Paperwork for this class may be picked up on October 2nd or 5th, cost is \$1.00, which covers printing. Please finalize your design by the 23rd so I can order necessary materials.

November Class. - 2nd and 6th

This month you'll fabricate your design! We'll also learn a new type of connection and a new style of clasp. Cost will depend on the materials used in your bracelet.

# SAVE THE DATE



madison  
street festival

[www.madisonstreetfestival.org](http://www.madisonstreetfestival.org)

HGMS will be there  
in a very prominent  
site. Come & Help

## OCTOBER 7, 2023

Come see us in The Teen Area!



## Pebble Pups - Thursday September 28, 6:30

Calling all Pebble Pups!

Come to the Sandra Moon Education Complex on September 28<sup>th</sup> for the Pebble Pups meeting at 6:30. In case you are a first timer, it is located at 7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville in the old Grissom High School Field House.

**See the map on page 9.**



This month, we will have a new meeting format. We will have stations set up so each Pup can turn in homework, work an activity that you missed, explore something new and of course, participate in the current program.

And this month's program is laying out the Pups display cabinet for the show. So be sure to bring your favorite rock/mineral that you want to display in our cabinet. And make sure you bring a label telling what it is, where you found it (if you personally collected it) and your name and age. First name and last name initial if OK. We just want to make sure you get your rock back.

We will also have other tables set up to sign in and turn in "homework" for credit, a Catch-Up table to work towards other badges, a coloring table, and maybe a table to do the crystal growing activity for those who missed it. And of course a sign-in table that will also be the "homework" turn in table. And we hope to have a "surprise" table with a really cool activity. One last table will be one to lay out the "bagged and tagged" rocks for homework and participation. It will be next to the sign-in/homework table.

One last opportunity, one of the badges is #16, "The World in Miniature", and under that is collecting and classifying sand. I have about two gallons of sand from Gulf Shores, AL and we plan to have a table set up with microscopes to see the structure of that sand. Here is your opportunity! If you will bring sand that you collect from a family trip over the next year, we can classify it as well and I will give you a sample of my Alabama Beach sand. You can collect sand from anywhere (including Sand Mountain) and it can be collected by a parent or a friend (say, White Sands, New Mexico) to share with the group! Be sure to collect enough to share with everyone. I collected two one-gallon Zip Lock bags full.



**World in Miniature**

But remember, Everyone must first help Dee Dee to layout and submit their specimen for the display case. After that, you can visit any or all of the activity stations!

## **Our Fall Gem Jewelry & Mineral Show is now only 1 month away.**

We will be recruiting Activity Leaders at the August Meeting, and these will begin recruiting helpers for all Show scheduled times.


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**Reminder** — Membership Dues will become **due** starting at the Show, and the cutoff will be Dec 31. This change is put in place to make it easier and less costly for us to maintain our association with the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, which among other benefits is how we get to attend Dixie Mineral Council Field Trips and our Insurance Coverage. Those fees are based on membership as of Dec 31.

Thanks Theresa Chivers [rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com](mailto:rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com)

Interpret the rebus' below and win a nice slab of Paint Rock Agate. Fill in the Table with the names of the seven mystery rocks and bring it to the September 26th Meeting to receive your prize. You may keep your newsletter, so you don't tear out the page.

Win a slab of Paint Rock

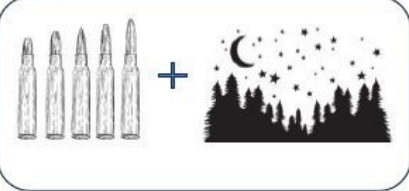


Bring your answers to the September Meeting  
**Must attend meeting to claim win**

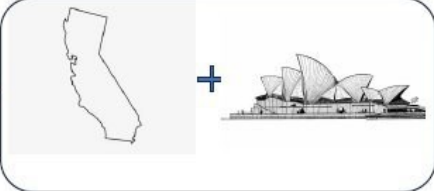
**Name**

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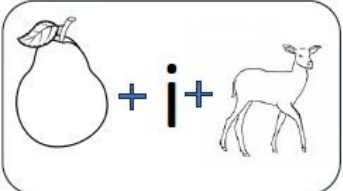
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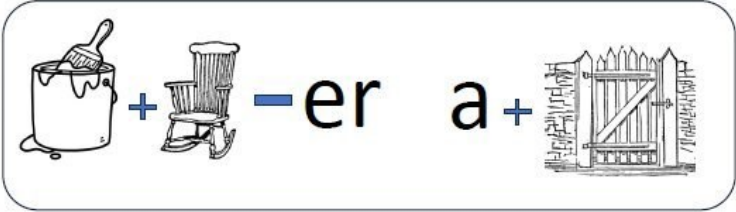
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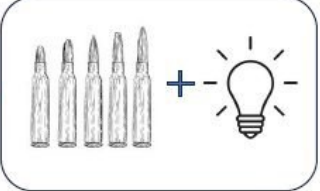
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bite bite bite

6



7



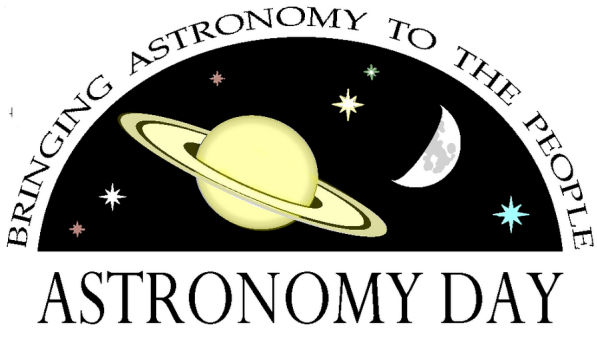
Von Braun Astronomical Society, VBAS Planetarium, Monte Sano State Park

Von Braun Astronomical Society will celebrate Astronomy Day on September 23rd in person at Monte Sano State Park! Beginning at 1:00 p.m., events will include: solar viewing, mini-planetarium shows, rockets, vacuum-chamber demonstrations of what it's like in space, and several other fun STEAM activities.

Astronomy Day is **FREE** and open to the public!

For more information, visit website <https://vbas.org/>

**If you would like to participate by helping with the HGMS booth, please contact Bill Friday, 256-527-8227**



## Mineral of the Month – Borax

By Leslie A. Malakowsky

Borax is a salt (a chemical compound with no electric charge, for example, table salt), a borate of sodium with the chemical formula  $\text{Na}_2\text{H}_2\text{O}_4\text{B}_4\text{O}_{17}$ . It's a colorless (white) crystalline mineral that dissolves in water, creating a basic (as opposed to acidic) solution. This mineral occurs naturally in deposits in dry lake beds created by the repeated evaporation of seasonal desert lakes.



The name borax was derived from the Middle English word *boras*. Borax mined in Asian countries is known as *tincal* (from Malay, the official language of Indonesia) and *tincar* (from Urdu/Persian Arabic). These two words were adopted into the English language in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.



Borax was first discovered in dry lake beds in Tibet. In the 8<sup>th</sup> century, tincal from Tibet, Persia, and other parts of Asia was traded by way of the Silk Road to the Arabian Peninsula. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, American miner Francis Smith formed the Pacific Coast Borax Company and began hauling borax out of California and Nevada deserts using wagons hitched to 20-mule teams. In 1893, this method was replaced by a rail spur, the 20 Mule Team Borax trademark was created, and the company started marketing and popularizing borax in a variety of applications. Today, the 20-Mule Team product lines are owned and manufactured by the American consumer products division of the Henkel company.

In the United States, the most commercially important deposits of borax are found in Boron, California; Searles Lake, California; and many other locations in the Southwest. Worldwide, borax is mined in Turkey, Chile, Bolivia, Tibet, and Romania. Borax is commonly available in powder form and has many industrial and household uses. In addition to laundry booster, borax is used in Boraxo powdered hand soap and tooth bleaching products. Other uses include pesticide; soldering flux; pottery glaze component; artisanal gold mining; and fire retardant, to name a few. In chemical laboratories, borax is used as a pharmaceutical alkaliizer, and to determine HbA1c (a form of hemoglobin chemically linked to sugar), which is an indicator of long-term high blood sugar in diabetes patients.



This month's mineral was inspired by National Soap Making Day, September 30<sup>th</sup>. Rockhounds are no strangers to getting dirty. We dig through dirt, slog through mud, and get wet, all for the sake of finding Earth's treasures! Eventually though, it's time to clean up. Reference: [wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org)



## September Birthdays

- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 3 Lola Flippo      | 14 Sheila Tesh       |
| 3 Gerdy Wyatt      | 16 Charlie Willhoite |
| 6 Ivey Cook        | 18 Lea Chamberlain   |
| 7 Mike Harrison    | 19 Mitzi Cartee      |
| 10 Marie Aldridge  | 23 Laurie Porter     |
| 11 Rick Williams   | 25 Areep Mohammed    |
| 12 Rodney Lane     | 28 Nina Edgeworth    |
| 13 Mark Falkenberg |                      |



September Sapphire

## Anniversaries

- 1 Frank & Shelley Curran
- 9 Hilde & Rick Williams
- 26 Bill & Rita Friday
- 29 Mike & Theresa Chivers
- Bruce & Allison Kowalczyk

## October Birthdays

- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 3 Theresa Chivers  | 20 Sam Tumminello    |
| 5 Patricia Forrest | 21 Emerson Arsenault |
| 9 Jordan Gibbs     | 21 Elijah Gray       |
| 10 Bonnie Treadway | 21 Jeannie Green     |
| 11 Diana Nelms     | 26 Maurice Thompson  |
| 18 James Lowery    |                      |



October Tourmaline

## Anniversaries

- 8 Aziz & Kristi Kazi
- 10 Seth & Rebecca Johnson
- 24 Leslie Malakowsky
- 29 Daniel & Susan Hessler

### The Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education, 7901 Bailey Cove Rd. SE, Huntsville AL 35802

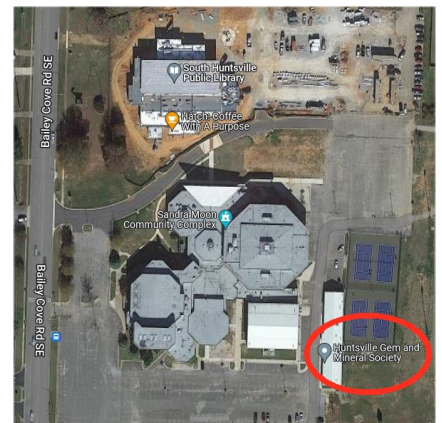
**Metal Smithing/Silver Instructors:** Shelley Curran, Kathy Bowman, Jan Edmunds

**Lapidary:** Bill Friday, James Yack, Anthony Zwilling, Les Bartel

**Rocket City Jewelers:** Judy Osmundson, Theresa Chivers, Leslie Malakowsky

**Pebble Pups:** Dee Dee Morton, Mike Harrison, Angela Mendoza, Bill Friday

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Metal Smithing/Silver</b>	<b>5:00pm - 9:00pm</b>
	<b>Lapidary</b>	<b>1st Monday each month 9:45am-2:00pm</b>
	<b>Lapidary</b>	<b>6:00pm - 9:00pm</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Lapidary</b>	<b>9:00am - 2:00pm</b>
	<b>HGMS Meetings</b>	<b>6:00pm - 8:30pm 4th Tuesdays</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Lapidary</b>	<b>6:00pm - 9:00pm</b>
	<b>Rocket City Jewelers 1st &amp; 3rd Weeks</b>	<b>- 6:00pm - 9:00pm</b>
	<b>Rocket City Jewelers 2nd, 4th, 5th Weeks</b>	<b>- 2:00pm - 5:00pm</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Lapidary</b>	<b>6:00pm - 9:00pm</b>
	<b>Metal Smithing/Silver</b>	<b>5:00pm - 9:00pm</b>
	<b>Pebble Pups</b>	<b>6:30pm 4th Thursdays</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Lapidary</b>	<b>6:00pm - 9:00pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Metal Smithing</b>	<b>9:00am - 3:00pm irregular 1st Saturday of the Month</b>





## 2023 HUNTSVILLE GEM &amp; MINERAL SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD

President– Anthony Zwilling - [afzwillig@gmail.com](mailto:afzwillig@gmail.com)

Vice President - Bill Friday - [bill.Friday@earthlink.net](mailto:bill.Friday@earthlink.net)

Recording Secretary: James Yack - [jamesgyack@gmail.com](mailto:jamesgyack@gmail.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)

Past President: Mike Harrison - [campcraft.mike@gmail.com](mailto:campcraft.mike@gmail.com)

## Directors:

Gene Powers - [genepowersgddm@gmail.com](mailto:genepowersgddm@gmail.com)

Les Bartel - [lester.bartel@gmail.com](mailto:lester.bartel@gmail.com)

Shelley Curran - [curranshelley1@gmail.com](mailto:curranshelley1@gmail.com)

Theresa Chivers - [rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com](mailto:rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com)

## 2023 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Property: Michael Cape

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

Program Chair—Bill Friday

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

Webpage: Leslie Malakowsky,

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

Auction Chair: Shelley Curran

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

Membership: Theresa Chivers

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

Field Trips: Bill Friday

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

Hospitality: Mike Harrison

[campcraft.mike@gmail.com](mailto:campcraft.mike@gmail.com)

Pebble Pups: Dee Dee Morton

[deemorton@hotmail.com](mailto:deemorton@hotmail.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 Publicity Chair - Tony Smith

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

Show Treasurer: Clara Goode, 256-883-9194

[claragoode1@comcast.net](mailto:claragoode1@comcast.net)

Mineral ID: Lowell Zoller

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

Facility Administrator: Bill Friday

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

Publicity: Open

**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 and enjoyment of the members and the general public in these areas. This purpose is accomplished through programs and activities, shows, lectures to school children and organizations, and exchange of rocks, minerals, artifacts, and newsletters.

**DUES:** Annual dues are \$20.00 per person, \$25.00 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) or at the HGMS Education Center during a meeting or at one of our activity periods: 7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 35802

Meetings: 4th 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:** DMC: <http://www.amfed.org/sfms/dmc/dmc.htm>

SFMS: <https://www.southeastfed.org/newsletter> - new, under construction

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

# 2023-24 CALENDAR

- 26 Sep '23 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- 13-15 Oct '23 - HGMS Fall Gem, Jewelry, and Mineral Show  
Jaycee Building, 2180 Airport Rd, Huntsville AL
- 24 Oct '23 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- 28 Nov '23 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- Dec '23 - Christmas Dinner -  
Date, time, and place to be determined
- 25 Jan '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- 27 Feb '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- 23 Mar '24 - HGMS Rock Auction Fund Raiser  
Details as available
- 23 Apr '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

Deadline for Next Newsletter  
October 15, 2023

**Dated material**  
**Do not delay**

September 2023

Rocket City Rocks & Gems  
Bill Friday, Editor  
2508 Excalibur Dr.  
Huntsville, AL 35803