

ROCKET CITY ROCKS & GEMS



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

Volume 55 No. 10

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

October 2023

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**HGMS Oct 24th Meeting, 6:00 gather, 6:30 business
Fluorescence - What is it, How is it?
You have seen them at our Fall Show
All will be explained**



Web Page - www.huntsvillegms.org/ email - hsvgems@gmail.com



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Lowell and I wish to thank all the members and others that helped with the Show. The dealers were most pleased with the show's attendance and the friendship and support the Club showed them. Attendance was great. The dealers had lots of empty space on their tables by the end of the show. The dinner was great. The Flume, Kids Area, Demonstrations, Fossil Dig, Dinosaur, and Display Cases were well patronized. We signed up 47 new families, including LOTS of kids. Please bring the yard signs to the next meeting. We got everyone out by 8:30pm.

Thanks, Tony and Lowell











Rocket City Jewelers (RCJ) News

October 2023

Hello jewelry makers! RCJ is open to all HGMS members 16 and older. All skill levels are welcome! We've started taking signups for 4th Quarter classes.

Please arrive early so we can start on time.

4th Quarter Classes:

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

/Oct 25: 2 – 5p: Love Knot (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.

Dec 13: Holiday party. Place and time TBD. (We're thinking La Alameda Mexican Restaurant.)

Meeting Times/Reservations:

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

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

We meet for Make Up only from 2p – 5p on 5th 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 **a month before class** at: rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com. Include your name, contact info, and the 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.

Reminder — Membership Dues became **due** starting at the Fall 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. SFMS Fees based on membership as of Dec 31.

Thanks Theresa Chivers rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com



NOVEMBER METALS CLASS PANEL BRACLET
 Nov 2nd and continuation of Oct. project. 6th

Last month was spent drawing designs and deciding on embellishment options. As we discussed options it became evident just how many there were and students are very eager to start. Note, please finalize designs by October 23rd so I can order materials.

This month will be spent fabricating the bracelet. We'll also learn a new type of connection and clasp.

Project cost will depend on materials used. At this writing a strip of 6x".5" 22g sterling at market price is \$12.25. You may wish to use more or less. Please allow for wire, clasp and any other design elements you'll need.

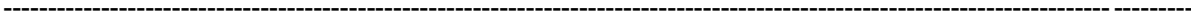
Any questions, come find me. I can't wait to see what everyone makes.



Certification/Safety Classes: The next Certification/Safety Class has been scheduled for **Monday November 29**. Please send your name and contact information (name, email address, and cell phone number (for text messages) to Certifications@wilddivystudio.com to get on the list for the class. Seats will be filled in the order I receive them. If you end up on the wait list, you will be added to the next scheduled class. Certification classes are scheduled approximately every other month.

CERTIFICATION CLASS INFORMATION – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY:

After Certification Class dates are set, email notices with information about the class(es) will be sent to everyone who is currently on the request list about a week before the scheduled date. You must reply to that email to be scheduled for the class or to request a future class. One reminder email will be sent to those who do not respond to the first email. If there is no reply after the 2nd email, **your name will be removed from Certification Requests list.** If you are still interested in Certification, you will have to send in your information again to get on the current list.



Facebook Users: The Metalsmithing class has our own page in Facebook groups. You can see info on classes, examples of project classes and other general information. Members of the group can post their finished class projects. Our class page is HGMS Metalsmithing Group. The link: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/438777169648170>

Volunteer Positions *

Class Instructors:	Kathy Bowman Shelley Curran
Tools/Equipment Inventory	Annie Diekmann
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.**



Pebble Pups - Thursday October 26, 6:30

Hello Pups!

Happy October. Fall is finally here! Well, we tried the new format and it was nice to have plenty of space and more than one subject. We will do it again with a twist. But the important thing is we will have three awesome subjects!



We will have three stations with three topics. We will divide up into three groups and spend about 20 minutes at each station.

One station will be making a tree ornament from a quartz crystal. We will be learning wire wrapping techniques! And you will keep yours for your tree.



Another station will be doing "Make Your Own" fossil impressions. So we will learn how molds and casts of body parts are formed!

The other station will discuss Selenite and Barite rosette-shaped crystals; what they are made of, how they are formed, and you will take one home for your collection!



That is what we do in Pebble Pups. We learn by doing and studying and we build our own collection!

We hope to see you on October 26th at 6:30 at the Sandra Moon complex in the big room of the old field house! And it just won't be as much fun without you there, so be there!

We had the best Display Case at the Fall Gem Jewelry and Mineral Show. See our Exhibit below.



Mineral of the Month – Thorite: var. Orangite

By Leslie A. Malakowsky

In the culinary world this time of year, millions of pumpkins find their way into Fall recipes and into our stomachs! In the mineral world, perhaps we can satisfy our yen for pumpkin, visually at least, with orangite! This beautiful orange mineral, with a little imagination, resembles raw pumpkin.



Orangite is a variety of the mineral thorite, a rare radioactive silicate mineral of the metallic element thorium. Thorite's formula is $(\text{Th,U})\text{SiO}_4$. This mineral was originally discovered in 1828 by Norwegian mineralogist Hans Esmark. He found the original black specimens in a pegmatite (an igneous rock consisting of interlocking crystals often reaching extreme size and perfection) in Norway. In 1829, Swedish chemist Jacob Berzelius named the mineral *thorite* because he found the new element thorium in it (thorium was previously unknown). Berzelius is considered to be one of the founders of modern chemistry (along with Robert Boyle, John Dalton, and Antoine Lavoisier). Most pegmatites consist of *felsic* igneous rocks that are relatively rich in light elements, such as silicon, oxygen, aluminum, sodium and potassium; the building blocks of quartz, feldspar and mica. (The word *pegmatite* comes from the Homeric Greek word *pegnymi*, which means "to bind together". Homeric Greek is the Greek language that Homer used in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.)



But the pegmatite in which Esmark originally found thorite was a *syenite* pegmatite. Syenite pegmatites are rare. They contain very little, if any, quartz and feldspar. They tend to be rich in dark elements, such as magnesium and iron, that form olivine, pyroxene, amphibole and biotite. Today, thorite is also found in volcanic rocks, hydrothermal veins, and metamorphic rocks. Its crystal system is tetragonal, and its hardness is 4.5 on the Mohs scale, which means it's between fluorite and apatite in hardness. Short prismatic crystals with pyramid shaped ends have been

found. But because it's radioactive, thorite commonly degrades in such a way that it destroys its own internal crystal structure leaving it amorphous like glass, so crystals are rare.



Thorite can be black (like the type specimens Esmark found), brownish black, orange (orangite), yellowish-orange and dark green. A variety of thorite called uranothorite is currently an important ore of uranium. Orangite was discovered in a syenite pegmatite in Brevig, Norway in 1851 (not the same pegmatite where Esmark originally found thorite). It was first described by the famous mineral dealer Bergeman and Krantz. Minerals commonly associated with orangite are natrolite, pectolite, zircon, allanite and diopside. Today, orangite is found in Alaska, California, Massachusetts and New Jersey, and in many international localities, but the source of that amazing orange color is still Brevig. Both thorite

and orangite are occasionally faceted into gemstones, but I couldn't find any health information related to wearing them. However, I did find the IGS (International Gem Society) toxicity table at

<https://www.gemsociety.org/article/gemstone-toxicity-table/>, although thorite isn't listed. That may mean that the level of radiation in thorite gemstones is negligible. So do your research before you buy!

References: wikipedia.org, mindat.org

Reminder — Membership Dues became 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, so members who haven't paid by Dec. 31 will not have insurance coverage for HGMS events.

Thanks Theresa Chivers rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com

September 26 2023 General Membership meeting

President Anthony Zwilling called the meeting to order. Welcome everybody. Please sign in.

New members: Jack Capps, Lindsey and Yvonne Hamilton are visiting. Please take a tour of our facility.

New folks can have a gift rock. Gary Richardson brought in a fantastic flower obsidian and a big chunk of ocean jasper.

Jim Lacefield's book, Lost Worlds in Alabama Rocks is for sale for \$30.

The September newsletter had a Rebus puzzle. Our winner is Matt McCann.

August minutes were accepted as published in the September newsletter.

We will be voting on new Board members at the October meeting. Please put your name in the hat if you wish to join the board. We need Fall Show volunteers for all days. Thursday is set-up day, with a Vendor and Worker evening dinner.

We need as many folks as can help for all three of the show days and extra help for set-up day. Please sign up for your choices of activities. Make sure you are putting Show signs on private land. Do not put the signs on public lands or the city may take them. We have red vests available for \$10 and logo patches for \$6. Stick-on patches have been ordered and can be worn on the vests. Please always wear a vest while on duty at the Show. Please wear a red shirt if you do not have a vest or apron of appropriate color. We have extra vests for loan while on duty if you do not want to buy one.

We have more display cases that need volunteers to fill with items. No competition - just have fun filling them up with your favorites.

Food vendor is Chef Shea. The menu should be prepared soon. We will have a tent set up around the food vendor for a little shade. A Board and Committee meeting for the show will be held tonight after the meeting.

Budget still has considerable unexpended funds. Treasurer Clara Goode was not at the meeting.

We will take credit cards this year and we will charge a \$1 fee for each transaction.

Rocket City Jewelers meets every Wednesday. Please check your newsletter for class schedule. Please RSVP all classes.

Our club gives out two #150 scholarships for one of the local art retreats. Please check their websites for registration. William Holland is offering scholarships as well.

Metalsmithing will have an October/November class for both months. Please see your newsletter for class descriptions and times.

We have many extra rocks in the lapidary lab. We are slicing slabs from these for the March auction. If you help you can keep a slab or two for yourself. Please see the lab instructor for more details. Lapidary lab is running smooth, with most of the equipment in good working order.

Pebble pups had about 40 family members attend last month. The group is growing, and will meet in the big south room this month.

James Yack, Recording Secretary

Officer and Board Elections will be held at this October meeting. Nominees so far are:

President - Mike Harrison, Bill Friday

Board - Les Bartel

Vice President - Shelley Curran

Board - Doug Blakeslee

Secretary - Open for nominations

Board - Theresa Chivers

Treasurer - Clara Goode (for her last term)

Board - Gene Powers

Anthony Zwilling will automatically be the Ex Officio as Past President

Nominations will be accepted from the floor during the meeting, but only for members who are present at the October meeting. President is elected for one term, with a maximum of 2 terms. The others are all elected for one term but may be re-elected without limit on terms.

HGMS Board & Committee Meeting Minutes – 26 Sep 2023, 8:30pm, following the General Membership Meeting. A Quorum of the Board members was present for any official business to be conducted. Thirteen members were present. The meeting was called for the purpose of clarifying various questions concerning the upcoming Fall Show.

Shelley asked: Who would get the items for the Raffle Bags, provide the Raffle tickets, and who would oversee them at the Show? There was no clear answer but Tony is probably responsible and would use left-over door prizes from last year. Hopefully Rodney Lane will be present to monitor the Raffle and the Guess-the-#-of Rocks Jar. Bill will contact Rodney. Gene will supply the jar and the rocks, pre-counted.

Red vests have been ordered – 50 in three sizes – 3XL (3), 2XL (27), M (20). They will be delivered by Oct 4. to Bill's house. Jan ordered 200 sticker logos to be applied for the show to any vests that are not purchased by members. Fifty cloth patches were ordered by Anthony and are on-hand for any to purchase for their own vests or aprons. Patches cost \$6 and vests cost \$10. There will be a box for the generally available vests in the Information Booth, which members may check out at the start of their work shift and return when they complete their shift. Used ones will be cleaned after the Show for next year and they will be stored in the Winchester storage unit.

Will there be a Vendor Refreshment cart, who will stock it, and who will convey it during the show? Tony has cups, ice is available from the Jaycees kitchen, and drinks will be ones left over from the Thursday evening Vendor Appreciation Meal, which is being handled by Deborah Barnhart.

For clarification, Jan is Assistant Vendor Chairman, working with Lowell toward his retirement.

Signs for many areas are needed. Jan is preparing them. Demonstrations (managed by Shelley & Kathy); Kids Area (sign is on hand, to be managed by Mike Harrison), ATM machine (which will be provided by Lynn Wood and which will be in the Information Booth); Information Booth (managed by Theresa), Restrooms, Food (which will be provided by a contracted Vendor – name not recorded here); Fossil Dig (which will be managed by James Yack); Front Outside Wall (on hand in storage, may need a bigger one); Flume (sign is in storage unit); Fluorescent Room (sign is in storage unit). The signs will be in large letters and mounted high above each area.

Flume bags were loaded by a work crew on Sat 16 Oct. They are currently stored in the Lapidary Room/

Leslie asked: Can we have On-Line sign-up for shift workers? Yes, but not this year. The method will also be useful for dues renewal. Theresa is familiar with the process and software and she will work with Leslie to implement it.

What is the status of the Art School Scholarships? Currently there are two for \$250. Drawing will be done at the October meeting among all who have pre-requested name entry (none accepted at the meeting). A motion was offered and approved to increase the amount to \$300. A motion was made and approved to create a third scholarship in 2024 for \$300 to be restricted for availability to those in leadership roles for HGMS activities – RCJ, Metals, Lapidary, Pups, etc, to reward one of these particular volunteers for their service. These leaders may also apply for the generally available scholarships, but can only win one. Prior winners are not eligible for the general drawing per the ByLaws.



Christmas Dinner Meeting

Our Christmas Dinner will be held again at Carrabba's in Parkway City. Meals will be individually ordered from the menu. Reservation has been made for up to 50 attendees. You may bring a gift for exchange. Details later.



Lapidary Art School Scholarship Drawing at the November Meeting.

The HGMS will be awarding two \$300 Scholarships for the winner's choice of William Holland or Wildacres Art Schools. Two alternates will also be drawn. No previous winner is eligible. To receive the HGMS check the winner must first apply to and be accepted by the school for the class of choice. Requests must be received email-only by Shelley Curran curranshelley1@gmail.com by Nov 21. William Holland will open for applications at 10:00 on Dec 4. Classes will fill up fast. Interested members are encouraged to apply ahead to establish an account - no upfront money or class selection required for this. 2024 Class Schedules not yet published William Holland <https://lapidaryschoolregistration.org/> (706) 379-2126

Wildacres - <https://wildacres.org/> - amywilloughbyburle@gmail.com Minimum age 21

The Southeast Federation sponsors selected weeks for special classes and rated, plus additional scholarship opportunities

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 | |

Anniversaries

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



October
Tourmaline

November Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 Daniel Hessler | 32 Max Mullen |
| 3 Nanette Schwartz | 24 Frank Curran |
| 4 Jessie Pelletier | 27 Betty Olson |
| 6 Sherrie Bonin | 27 Sheila Cape |
| 7 Hannah Readus | 30 Mary Jean Brost Travis |

Anniversaries

- 10 Woody & Lea Chamberlain
- 12 Bob & Ruth Kemper
- 22 Bill & Maureen Lokken
- 26 Jerry & Judy Osmundson



November
Topaz

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

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



2023 HUNTSVILLE GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD

President– Anthony Zwilling - afzwillig@gmail.com

Vice President - Bill Friday - bill.Friday@earthlink.net

Recording Secretary: James Yack - jamesgyack@gmail.com

Treasurer: Clara Goode, 256-883-9194 - claragoode1@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor: Bill Friday - 256-527-8227 - bill.friday@earthlink.net

Past President: Mike Harrison - campcraft.mike@gmail.com

Directors:

Gene Powers - genepowersgddm@gmail.com

Les Bartel - lester.bartel@gmail.com

Shelley Curran - curranshelley1@gmail.com

Theresa Chivers - rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com

2023 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Property: Michael Cape

macape@knology.net

Program Chair—Bill Friday

bill.friday@earthlink.net

Webpage: Leslie Malakowsky,

lmalakowsky@gmail.com

Auction Chair: Shelley Curran

curranshelley1@gmail.com

Membership: Theresa Chivers

rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com

Field Trips: Bill Friday

bill.friday@earthlink.net

Hospitality: Mike Harrison

campcraft.mike@gmail.com

Pebble Pups: Dee Dee Morton

deemorton@hotmail.com

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

tsmith@erc-incorporated.com

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

Lzol@comcast.net

Show Publicity Chair - Tony Smith

tsmith@erc-incorporated.com

Show Treasurer: Clara Goode, 256-883-9194

claragoode1@comcast.net

Mineral ID: Lowell Zoller

Lzol@comcast.net

Facility Administrator: Bill Friday

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 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

2023-24 CALENDAR

- 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
- 12 Dec '23 - Christmas Dinner - Carrabba's Italian Restaurant - 5:30pm
Huntsville Parkway City Mall upper deck
- 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 - Please Donate items
- 23 Apr '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- 28 May '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- 25 June '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm



The eclipse peak
as we saw it

Deadline for Next Newsletter
November 18, 2023

**Dated material
Do not delay**

October 2023

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