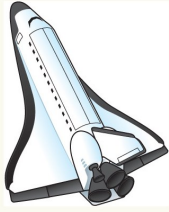


ROCKET CITY ROCKS & GEMS



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

Volume 56 No. 9

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

September 2024

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Dues Renewal Time	2
Minutes of the Aug Mtg.....	2
Metalsmithing Corner	3
2024 Officer Nominations List	3
Rocket City Jewelers	4
Downtown Library Display	4
Pebble Pups	5
Show Volunteer Request.....	6
Brad's Bench Tips	7
Mineral of the Month	8
DMC August Field Trip	9
Sep & Oct Birthdays & Anniv,.....	10
Activity Schedule.....	10
Executive Board & Committees.....	11
Calendar.....	12

September 24, 2024, 6:00pm

HGMS Education Center, 7901 Bailey Cove Rd, Hsv AL

The Rocket City Jewelry (RCJ) Team will present a craft demonstration of a typical jewelry project. They specialize in wire wrapping, chain maille, and other amazing and fun ways to create items to complement your wearing apparel.



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



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Dues Renewal Time

It's that time again. Time to renew your membership. Please renew your membership at our fall show. Remember your current membership expires October 1. The fall show is the perfect time and chance to renew your membership! I will be at the information booth to take your dues and hand out your new membership cards. Make sure you come see me! Membership fees are \$20 for an individual membership (cash or check), \$21 if you charge your membership, \$25 for a family membership (cash or check), \$26 if you charge your membership. A family membership is defined as 2 adults living in the same household and any children under the age of 18 or grandchildren whose parents are not members.

Minutes of the August 28, 2024 Membership Meeting

President Mike Harrison called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m. Dawn Haygood, Brandon Harell, and Wayne Hand from Osborne's Jewelers in Huntsville discussed various aspects of the jewelry business. Our own AJ Bischoff answered questions about faceting. Judy and Jerry Osmundson assembled the new black tent that made for the Fluorescent mineral display at the Show. Amber Smith (who helped us acquire display cabinets for the museum) announced that the first-ever Scottsboro Renaissance Faire will be 9:00a.m.-6:00p.m. on Sat., November 9th. For details, email her at finalgladios@gmail.com.

Rocket City Jewelers. RCJ meets every Wednesday. The meeting time alternates every Wednesday, so please see the newsletter for the schedule. The September class is a "pumpkin" pendant – a carnelian cabochon wire-wrapped to resemble a pumpkin. Visitors are welcome! You can sign up with Judy tonight.

Metalsmithing. The September class is a pair of fused mixed-metal earrings. The class will be in two sessions: Thurs., September 5th and Mon., September 9th. Both sessions will be 5:00p.m.-9:00p.m.

Pebble Pups. Plans for next year's activities are ready. The Pups are learning a birthstone every month this year. Next year, they'll learn a different fossil every month.

Treasurer. Activity groups need to use the rest of their budgets before the end of the year.

Membership. This year's membership period ends September 30th. You can renew your membership at the September or October meeting or at the Show.

Lapidary. Bill acquired an intarsia machine from , who is available to teach, along with Les Bartel. On Sat., September 21st, John Wild, a staff lapidary instructor at Wm. Holland School of Lapidary Arts, will train our HGMS instructors in proper cabochon preparation. 8 people are in the class.

Show. We still need more volunteers in all areas of the show such as Thursday setup, vendor/volunteer dinner, ticket table, mining flume, and much more! The show is our main source of income, so please volunteer! You can sign up with Debbi tonight. Lowell clarified that setup starts at 8:30a.m. on Thurs., September 10th, not later in the day. We'll be done with take down by around 8p.m. on Sun., September 13th. He also announced that we have 4 new vendors this year.

Board Business. The board is revising and updating the Constitution and ByLaws. These documents will be emailed to the membership for review in time for feedback at the October meeting.

Nominating Committee. Doug is taking nominations for officers, Newsletter Editor, and Directors-at-Large for 2025. We'll vote at the October meeting. If you want to be added to the ballot, email Doug Blakeslee at hsvgems@gmail.com

Other Business. Mike announced that he's stepping down as our President as he'll be moving to Georgia soon. He officially passed the gavel to Shelley. He'll stay on with us until after the show.

The business meeting was adjourned at 8:15p.m. We had 39 members and 2 new members (Emily Wilson and Don Newbold) in attendance, and each selected a complimentary rock.



Metal Smithing/Silver Group by Kathy Bowman & Shelley Curran

No Project class in October because of the HGMS Gem and Mineral Show

November Class Preview: Spinner Rings

We have had several requests to have a Spinner Ring class. The last time we made this project we were meeting in the Senior Center. We will be making the ring in 20 gauge silver, so the class fee is TBD and will be determined by the price of silver when we order the supplies. The picture in this article is some of our first class samples from way back. (We will have a new class samples photos in the next newsletter.) The class dates will probably be Thursday, November 7 and Monday, November 11. Check next month's newsletter for date confirmation.

The signup sheet will be available during Monday and Thursday night classes in October and at the October HGMS You can also sign up for this class by sending email to

HGMS@wilddivystudio.com starting October 7th.

Certification/Safety Classes: The next Certification/Safety Class is scheduled for Tuesday, November 19th. 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
Jan Edmunds (Monday AM)
Opening
Opening
Shelley Curran
Kathy Bowman

Tools/Equipment Inventory

Store Manager

Kit Manager

Webpage & Social Media Management

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



Nominations for 2025 HGMS Executive Board

Thanks to Doug Blakeslee for heading up the Nominating Committee

Nominations may be accepted at the October meeting. Voting will be held during the November meeting.

President - Shelley Curran

Vice President - Anthony Zwilling

Secretary - Debbie Epperson

Treasurer - Theresa Chivers

Editor - Bill Friday

Directors - vote for four

Les Bartel

Doug Blakeslee

James Yack

Ashlee Pool

James Mallonee



Rocket City Jewelers (RCJ) News September 2024

RCJ is open to all HGMS members 16 and older. All skill levels are welcome! No certification is required, but experience using jewelry tools is a plus. We offer one class a month with 4 opportunities to finish the project. **Note:** Should severe weather occur on any RCJ meeting day, the meeting will be canceled, and Judy will notify the group.

The schedule for the rest of the year is shown below. Please note that if you're signed up for the **Wire Wrapped Pumpkin**, there are 2 sessions left: **Sept 18th from 6-9p and Sept 25th from 2-5p.**

To sign up for a class, please email Theresa at rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com a month before class. Include your name, contact info, and the class(es) you want. You can also sign up at RCJ meetings and monthly HGMS meetings.

September



October



November



October: Layered Metal Earrings (LME), 5th in the Series - Rivets

Oct 2 and 16: 6 – 9p, class and make up.

Oct 9 and 23: 2 – 5p, class and make up.

Oct 30 (5th Wed): 2 – 5p, make up.

Be sure to read Judy's email (dated 9/9) about this class. You'll use sheet metal, bead spacers, and rivets to make at least 1-2 pairs of earrings. All materials and tools will be provided. Photo shows sample designs. Check out Pinterest for more design ideas. Or check with Judy at the email address above.

November: Wire Wrapped Black "Shimmerstone" (Larvikite) Cab

Nov 6 and 27: 6 – 9p, class and make up.

Nov 20: No meeting; happy Thanksgiving.

Nov 13: 2 – 5p, class and make up.

December:

Dec 4: 6 – 9p, finish up.

Dec 11: Christmas party. Time & place TBA.

Dec 18, 25, and Jan 1: No meetings. Classes resume on Jan 8.



50th Anniversary Gala

Studio 60, the Huntsville Senior Center, will be celebrating 50 years of serving our Senior Citizens at 2200 Drake Ave. October 5, 2024, 5:30 to 10:00pm

You won't want to miss this event! STUDIO 60 will sparkle and be music and fun-filled for an unforgettable evening! Come see all our center has to offer and party for a great cause. Find details and tickets by calling 256.880.7080.

The Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society is a long time proud adjunct of the Huntsville Senior Center.



Pebble Pups Meeting - September 26, 2024 - 6:30

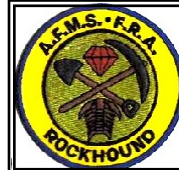
Hey Pups and Parents!

With the Gem & Mineral Show at the Jaycees Building on Airport Rd just a month away, Oct 11-13, Dee Dee & Mike will spend some time showing how you can show off your collection! First, you will be able to sign up to help with the Kids Area any time during Friday thru Sunday. You can sign up for your very own showcase to exhibit your collection, or you may bring your treasures to the September meeting in a marked zip lock bag for inclusion in the display case.

Of course Angela will discuss the September birthstone of the month, Sapphires, and all you need to know about them!

And Theresa will help you create a really cool Fall jewelry piece as well.

The Southeastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies each year invites young members to craft an entry incorporating the coming year, for inclusion in their newsletters. Cheyenne Chivers submitted the winning entry for next year. Congratulations to Cheyenne. Other entries were submitted for consideration by Mackenzie Chivers, Lily Chivers, and Maxwell Sager.



Earth Resources



Rocks & Minerals



Showmanship

Come on out and we will see you on the 26th of September at the Ed Center at 6:30. The doors will be open by 6:00 PM so you can come early and browse thru the rock garden outside and maybe find a cool rock that someone else thought was "leverite"!

Your Pups Leadership Team, Angela, Theresa, Dee Dee, Bill, Matthew, and Mike



Galaxy S21+ 5G

Hi to all HGMS Members, You are NEEDED!!

Many opportunities to meet and work with your fellow Huntsville Rock and Gem members are on the horizon!

Are you a member who has NEVER volunteered to help at the show?
Come and make new friends and show off your people skills!

Sign up to help Thursday from 8:00am till finished that evening, October 10th.
It's a SET UP day & needs many hands to be a success!

Come at 4 with a dish for the potluck! (dishes can be dropped off all day) but then...
Stay and Help setting up: HGMS info booth, fluorescent room, display cases, gem flume, kids area, fossil dig, demo booth, set up posters for the scavenger hunt, more, more!

All this HAS to be done Thursday night after the meal!

October 11, 12, 13 We still Need 10 more volunteers each day!

All Stations take, including gem flume, kids areas, fossil dig, demo booth and Ticket sales, water cart, info people walking the floor. We have red vests for you to wear while on duty. If you haven't signed up, help to support your organization and show Huntsville who we are by volunteering.

Call/email Debbie Epperson with the days mornings or afternoons that you will help your club!

Debbie Epperson 256-337-5000 debbieshomes@yahoo.com

September Library Display

Be sure to check out our display at the downtown Huntsville Public Library, 915 Monroe Street, Huntsville, AL. (The display is on the right just after you walk through the double glass doors into the front lobby.) We set up a library display twice a year. It's a great way to show folks who we are, and it helps advertise the Auction in the Spring and the Show in the Fall! The display features various aspects of the club. Last March, we added Pebble Pups and this time we added Faceting Gemstones another *facet* of the HGMS! You can view the display now through September 29th. Don't miss it!



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.



TAPERED REAMERS

A tool you don't see often these days is a tapered reamer. It's not a tool you'll use everyday, but they're particularly useful for making an irregular hole round or for enlarging a hole to an exact diameter. For example, the small set in the yellow pouch is for holes in the range of 0.3mm to 2.5mm. They are great for sizing a tube to fit a hinge pin. Other times when I'm drilling a hole for riveting and can't find the exact size drill, I simply drill the holes with a slightly smaller bit and enlarge them with a reamer until the wire just fits.

For larger hole sizes in sheet metal up to 14 ga, I really like the reamer with the black handle. It makes quick work of sizing holes from about 3mm to 12mm. You can find them in well-equipped hardware stores.

You may never use the large diameter reamers, but when sawing out a ring from 4mm thick sheet, I found they worked well for rounding and sizing the hole.



TESTING FOR SILVER

Often you need to identify some of those unknown "silvery" pieces of metal in the bottom of the toolbox or some piece of old jewelry that is not hallmarked. Is it silver or is it something else?

Of course, if you need to know exactly what you have, it's best to send your metals off for refining. But inexpensive silver testing solutions can be used to help distinguish higher silver content alloys from alloys that have the same appearance but with little to no silver content, like German Silver or Nickel.

I purchased a half-ounce bottle of JSP Silver Testing Solution #GT41. It's not a rigorous analytic test, but it lets you know if you're on the right track. And it's inexpensive. Mine was only \$3.

With a fresh solution you have an instant reaction after applying it to the metal being tested. The procedure is simple - apply a small drop and watch for a color change. Note that the acid will leave a slight mark, so choose a spot that is out of the way or will be easy to polish.

If you suspect the object is silver plated, you should file a little notch somewhere inconspicuous to expose what metal is below the surface. Otherwise, all you test will be the surface plating.

Here's the reaction I get when testing various materials:

- . 80% silver 20% copper . Dark red changing to gray
- Fine silver Red/Orange
- . Sterling silver Brick Red
- Brass Yellow changing to blue
- . Nickel Gray-green
- . Copper Yellow changing to blue
- . Steel Black
- . Stainless Steel No color change

Caution - If you do any of this testing, know that you are handling a reasonably strong acid. The GT41 label says it includes nitric acid and potassium dichromate.

Wear safety glasses.

Do not get any testing solution on your skin.

Use a solution of baking soda and water to neutralize acid.

Wash and clean up well when you're done.



Yellow orange orpiment
with orange red realgar.

Mineral of the Month – Orpiment

By Leslie A. Malakowsky

Orpiment is an arsenic sulfide mineral with the formula As_2S_3 . It ranges in color from lemon yellow, to golden yellow, to brownish yellow much like the sunflowers we enjoy in North Alabama this time of year. This mineral occurs in a variety of crystal shapes – foliated (repetitively layered) columnar or fibrous aggregates; reniform (kidney shaped) or botryoidal (like a bunch of grapes); granular or powdery; and (rarely) prismatic. It has a hardness of 1.5-2 (between talc and gypsum) on Mohs scale and a pale lemon-yellow or bright golden-yellow streak.

Orpiment can be found in three geologic environments = volcanic fumaroles (openings that emit hot gases), low-temperature hydrothermal veins (cracks in the rock through which hot water circulates), and hot springs (formed when geothermally heated water emerges on the surface). Orpiment can also be an alteration product of another arsenic sulfide mineral called realgar. (*Alteration* refers to natural processes that alter a mineral's chemical composition or crystallography.) Realgar is soft, too, and it can occur in the same shapes and in the same

geologic environments as orpiment. By itself, realgar is red, and it has a red or red-orange streak, no yellow. When orpiment and realgar are combined in the same specimen, visual inspection may be enough to distinguish them. Realgar can be red to orange red, and orpiment can be yellow to yellow orange. But when these minerals are thoroughly mixed together, chemical analysis may be necessary to distinguish them.

Orpiment has been ground into a powder and used in paint, medicine, alchemy, poison, and other applications for centuries. For example, as a pigment, orpiment has been found in 6th century Central Asian wall paintings, on ancient-Egyptian tomb wall decorations, and on the walls of the Taj Mahal. In Europe, orpiment wasn't known until medieval times when Europeans began importing it from Asia. It was one of the few clear, bright-yellow pigments available to European artists at that time. Orpiment has been found on historic church alters and religious icons, sculptures, and folk art. Even so, the use of orpiment pigment in Europe was uncommon until the 19th century when Impressionist artists started using it. Today, orpiment is used to produce infrared-transmitting glass, oil cloth, semiconductors, photconductors, and fireworks. It occurs all over the world including many states in the U.S. In some parts of the world, orpiment is still used as a paint pigment, but it's becoming less common because of its toxicity, degradation over time, and incompatibility with newer pigments.

The name orpiment was derived from the Latin word *auripigmentum* (*aurum*, meaning "gold" and *pigmentum*, meaning "pigment"), due to its yellow color and the ancient belief that it contained gold. Interestingly, in Chinese, orpiment is called *Ci-Huang*, meaning "female yellow" and realgar is called *Xiong-Huang*, meaning "male yellow" in reference to their shared characteristics and occurrence.

Caution: Orpiment and realgar contain arsenic. Care must be taken when handling specimens.

References: wikipedia.org, mindat.org

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, Theresa Chivers
Rocket City Jewelers: Judy Osmundson, Theresa Chivers, Leslie Malakowsky
Pebble Pups: Mike Harrison, Angela Mendoza, Theresa Chivers, Dee Dee Morton, Bill Friday

Monday	Metal Smithing/Silver	5:00pm - 9:00pm
	Lapidary	1st Monday each month 9:45am-2:00pm (Except Aug and Sep)
	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	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



2024 HUNTSVILLE GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD

President: Shelley Curran -
 Acting Vice President: - Bill Friday -
 Secretary: James Yack -
 Treasurer: Clara Goode -
 Assistant Treasurer: Theresa Chivers -
 Editor: Bill Friday -
 Past President: Mike Harrison -
 Directors:
 Les Bartel -
 Doug Blakeslee -
 Anthony Zwilling -

2024 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Property: Bill Friday	Show Chair: Tony Smith,
Program Chair— Shelley Curran	Show Vendor Chair: Lowell Zoller,
Webpage: Leslie Malakowsky,	Assistant Vendor Chair: Jan Edmunds
Auction Chair: Shelley Curran	Show Publicity Chair - Tony Smith
Membership: Theresa Chivers	Show Treasurer: Clara Goode,
Field Trips: Bill Friday	Mineral ID: Lowell Zoller
Hospitality: Mike Harrison	Facility Administrator: Bill Friday
Pebble Pups: Dee Dee Morton	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 October 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

2024 - 25 CALENDAR

24 Sep '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

11-13 Oct '24 - Annual Fall Gem Jewelry and Mineral Show
Jaycees Building 2180 Airport Rd, Huntsville AL

22 Oct '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

26 Nov '24 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

10 Dec '24 - Christmas Dinner Meeting - Details as available

28 Jan '25 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

25 Feb '25 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

22 Mar '25 Sat - Annual Rock Sale / Auction - details to be announced

22 Apr '25 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

27 May '25 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

Deadline for Next Newsletter
October 13, 2024

Dated material
Do not delay

September 2024

Rocket City Rocks & Gems
Bill Friday, Editor
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Huntsville, AL 35803