

# ROCKET CITY ROCKS & GEMS



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

Volume 56 No. 10

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

October 2024

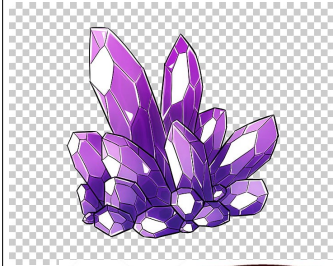
## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Note .....	2
Metalsmithing Corner .....	2
Rocket City Jewelers .....	3
Show Report .....	4
Pebble Pups .....	5
New Intarsia Machine & Class.....	5
Mineral of the Month .....	6
Brad's Bench Tips .....	7
Activity Schedule.....	8
Executive Board & Committees.....	9
Calendar.....	10

## October 22, 2024, 6:00pm - Show & Tell

HGMS Education Center, 7901 Bailey Cove Rd, Hsv AL

Bring three of your favorite rock related specimens—minerals, jewelry, fossils, whatever, and present them to the membership. We will have the close-up camera (working this time) to project them on the screen.



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



Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society (HGMS) 2024. 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.



The Show is over and done for another year. I hope everyone got home safely and had some time to rest up.

I can't say a big enough THANK YOU to all the members who gave so generously, of their time and in kind. It couldn't have been done without you!

I hope you found some treasures at the show, made new friends and connections and the energy of the show renewed your enthusiasm for all things lapidary.

Shelley Curran, President

HGMS memberships dues are due now. If anyone didn't pay their dues before or at the show please mail them in to me or bring them to the meeting, please?

Thanks, Theresa - Membership Chairlady



Metal Smithing/Silver Group by Kathy Bowman & Shelley Curran

November Class: Spinner Ring

**Thursday November 7**

**Monday, November 11**

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. You can also sign up for this class by sending email to [HGMS@wildivystudio.com](mailto:HGMS@wildivystudio.com).

**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@wildivystudio.com](mailto:Certifications@wildivystudio.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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.



# Rocket City Jewelers (RCJ) News

October 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.

To sign up for a class, please email Theresa at [rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com](mailto: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.

### Remaining Classes:

#### October: Layered Metal Earrings (LME), 5<sup>th</sup> in the Series - Rivets

Oct 16 and 30 (5<sup>th</sup> Wed): 2 – 5p, class and make up.

Oct 23: 6 – 9p, class and 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 de-

signs.

Check out Pinterest for more design ideas.

#### November: Wire-Wrapped Black “Shimmerstone” Cab

Nov 6 and 20: 6 – 9p,

November

class and make up.

Nov 13: 2 – 5p, class and make up.

Nov 27: No meeting. Happy Thanksgiving!

#### December:

Dec 4: 6 – 9p, finish up.

Dec 11: Christmas party. Time & place TBA.

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



October



November



## Fall 2024 Gem Jewelry and Mineral Show

Lots of great vendor offerings, lots of public in there buying, lots of HGMS members helping in very many ways. Wednesday marking off the booth spaces on the floor and Thursday all day helping set up vendors and our activities, followed by a delicious Appreciation dinner. There were many activities in the Kids Area, wonderful new fluorescent tent with new lights, hospitality cart, regular door prize winners, ticket table, crowds at the Mineral Flume & busy ATMs. Many red vests were visible around the room all day. At the Information booth we added 28 new families, that is 48 new adults and 18 kids. At closing 5:00 Sunday evening, the place was taken apart and the big room was nearly empty by 8:00.

# THANKS to ALL





## Pebble Pups - Thursday October 24, 6:30 - at the Education Center

Hey Pups and Parents!



### Intro

Sand Membership

Badges awarded

Other reminders as necessary

### Session 1

Anthony will discuss October Birthstone, Opals. (Rocks & Minerals Badge)

### Session 2

Angela and Kendall will discuss fossils. (Fossils Badge)

### Session 3

Bill will discuss Birefringence - double refraction, (Special Effects Badge)

See you this Thursday, Oct 24th at the Ed Center at 6:30!

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



Special Effects



Fossils



Rocks & Minerals



## Stone Intarsia Class – 2-Day Class

Tuesdays Nov 12 & 19 – 9:00am

4 Slots per Class - Louise Fletcher - Instructor

Cost \$20/student for Consumables including tools, glue, epoxy, and stone\*

Requires prior certification on slab & trim saws, flat lap, grinding wheels

\*bring your own stone if so desired.

All stones within a piece must be the same hardness

Stone Intarsia is a term for the inlay technique of using cut and polished stones to create an image. Its history traces back to Italy and the Renaissance, where it was called *pietre dure*, meaning “hard stones”. This differed from mosaics as the stone itself was purposefully shaped to create the art, rather than arranging pieces of loose stone into a scene. It also typically features a stone frame of some kind, to help lock the individual pieces in place.



Mineral of the Month – Quartz (var. Skeleton Quartz) *By Leslie A. Malakowsky*

This month’s mineral was inspired by Halloween and Dia del Muerto (“Day of the Dead”). Skeleton quartz (also called “skeletal”, “window”, “frame” or “fenster” quartz), is one of several morphological peculiarities that can occur in quartz that has visible crystal faces. Mineralogists use these unique features to help determine the conditions under which the crystals formed. These “growth forms” are considered varieties of quartz just like varieties based on color.



Skeleton quartz crystal faces are characterized by elevated edges giving them a ribbed look (hence the name “skeleton”) or a layered look. This feature can occur on individual crystals or on crystals in a cluster. The crystals can be short, elongated, or doubly terminated. This feature can occur in nearly clear quartz, milky quartz, and colored varieties such as amethyst, rose quartz, and smoky quartz. Skeleton quartz forms when silicon dioxide (SiO<sub>2</sub>) crystallizes in unstable conditions such as rapid growth and supersaturation (the inability of a solute to completely dissolve in a solution). This causes the crystal edges to grow faster than the faces resulting in hollow, stepped depressions. The edges can be irregular, nearly parallel, or parallel with each other. Parallel edges can be so perfect that the crystal resembles an inverted industrial container known as a hopper. The depressions can be smooth or etched, and they can have clay, gas, or water filled cavities in them. Other minerals in which skeleton or hopper crystals can occur include calcite, galena, gold, halite (salt), water (ice), and lab grown bismuth.

Skeleton quartz occurs in vugs (small- to medium-sized cavities in rock) or in pockets in granitic pegmatites (exceptionally coarse-grained igneous rocks composed of interlocking crystals). Pegmatite skeleton quartz is associated with the feldspars microcline and albite and occasionally with rare pegmatite minerals such as lepidolite and amblygonite.

Skeleton quartz is found all over the world, most notably Brazil, Madagascar, the Swiss Alps, and the United States. One of the best localities in the United States is the Diamond Hill Quartz Mine near Antreville, South Carolina. Skeleton quartz is fun to collect this time of year. It makes intriguing shelf specimens and it’s also used for jewelry and decorative objects.

References: [mindat.org](http://mindat.org), *Rock and Gem* magazine, October 16, 2023. See also [mcrocks.com/images/DiamondHillGeology.html](http://mcrocks.com/images/DiamondHillGeology.html) for more information on the Diamond Hill Quartz Mine.



Smoky skeleton quartz



Rose skeleton quartz w/secondary drusy



Skeleton quartz w/black phantom



Skeleton quartz pendant



## Brad's Bench Tips

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



## WINDING JUMP RINGS

If you need a few jump rings the same size, it's easy to grab a round rod and wind as many as you need. But when you need a lot of them, some form of winder saves a lot of time. A variable speed screw gun makes quick work of winding the coils. Screw guns are quite inexpensive at discount stores and are remarkably handy for odd jobs in the shop and around the house.

To wind a coil, just bend a right angle on the end of the wire about a half inch long and insert this into the screw gun chuck. Then wind slowly, keeping a tight coil. I like to rest the end of the mandrel on the edge of the table or bench pin. Finally, one note of caution. If you are winding an entire length of wire, be careful as you get near the end of the wire. If the end passes under your thumb, it can cause a nasty scratch or cut.



## TOUCHING UP A BEZEL

Pumice wheels are good for touching up a bezel after you've set the stone. The hardness is about 6 on the Moh's scale, less hard than quartz, so it shouldn't scratch any of your agates or jaspers. However, I'd avoid or be real careful of using pumice near the softer stones like turquoise, amber, howlite, etc.

If you're unsure about the hardness of your wheels, test them on a piece of glass. Glass is about 5 ½ on the Mohs scale, softer than quartz. So if the wheel doesn't harm glass, it's safe for use on the quartzes and harder stones.

My preference is the one inch diameter ones such as those shown at [riogrande.com/Product/AdvantEdge-Pumice-Wheels-Medium/332722?pos=2](http://riogrande.com/Product/AdvantEdge-Pumice-Wheels-Medium/332722?pos=2)



**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**

<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 (Except Aug and Sep)</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>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>





**2024 HUNTSVILLE GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD**

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

**2024 COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

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

**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](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)**

# 2024 - 25 CALENDAR

- 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 very soon
- 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
- 25 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
- 21 Jun '25 - Annual HGMS Picnic, Monte Sano State Park
- 22 Jul '25 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- 26 Aug '25 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
- 23 Sep '25 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center  
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

Deadline for Next Newsletter  
November 17, 2024

**Do not Delay  
Dated Material**

October 2024

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