ROCKET CITY ROCKS & GEMS





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

Volume 58 #11 *"We'll go to the Moon for a Rock"* **November 2026**

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HGMS Meeting - 24 Nov 2026 - 6:00

Dear friends

As we enter the holiday season, I take time to be grateful for each of you. The folks at HGMS each add so much richness to my life! Remember the Christmas party on Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 6:00 pm. Bring a covered dish (with something in it.) If you would like to participate in the gift exchange, bring a wrapped gift in the $20 range marked male or female. We have many first time members. Come and get to know new friends!

Have a safe, special and thougtful holiday season!

Jan

Here is a link to photos from our show. PHOTOS

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

Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society (HGMS) 2026. 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.

Montgomery Gem and Mineral Society President Chris Rutherford update:

Chris was relocated to a rehab facility in Dothan the end of October. His wife Cathy says so far, so good. He's doing PT and getting around in a wheelchair.

Membership Dues!!!

Hi All. A special thank you to all who paid their dues at the show. You have made my job easier! For those that haven't paid their dues for 2027, **your dues are due now**! Remember your membership is from November 1-September 30 the following year. I will be at the meeting on Nov 24 to collect dues. Please help me out by paying your dues before I have to send you an email reminder! Also remember if you do not renew your membership by December 15th you will be dropped from our database and if you choose to renew after that a $5 late fee will be applied. Thanks you for your help.

HGMS Scholarship

Every year the Club offers scholarships for continuing education. There are three scholarships this year, each for 300.00 dollars. Two are available to the general membership and one solely for Instructors.
To be eligible you must be a member in good standing, apply before the deadline and not have won in the previous year. It is too late to apply for this years scholarship, but please keep it in mind for next year.

The drawing will be held at the November meeting. We will draw for a winner and an alternate. Good Luck everyone!

Metal Smithing/Silver Group by Kathy Bowman & Shelley Curran

November Newsletter Article

November Class: Copper Washer Bracelet

DECEMBER PROJECT CLASS.. CORRUGATED COPPER CUFF BRACELET



December 7th, 5:00 pm.
Class fee: $ 9.00 Includes all materials and consumables.

In this class you'll make a two layered cuff bracelet. The bottom layer is heavy gauge copper and you'll learn how to make a ruffle on the edges. For the top layer we'll use thinner metal and corrugate it using a special tool.

This design can go in many directions once you get the hang of making it. It should be a fun class.

The last open studio meeting for Metals in 2026 will be December 17th. Metals will reopen on Monday, January 4th, 2027.

Certification/Safety Classes: The next Certification/Safety class will be Wednesday, January 20. Currently there the request list has openings but those will fill quickly after the show.. Send your name and contact information (name, email address, and cell phone number (for text messages) to Certifications@wildivystudio.com. to get on the List.. Seats will be filled in the order we receive them. We only have space for 9 students per class. Note: If your email is requesting a seat for more than one student, I need the contact information(name, email, and phone number) for each student.

CERTIFICATION CLASS INFORMATION – PLEASE READ CAREFULLY:

Important Notice tho: You must have current paid membership to attend any of our classes including the Certification Class This is a required by our imsurance. Membership will be verified.

After Certification Class dates are set, email notices with information about the class(es) will be sent to the first 9 people 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 the 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)
Tools/Equipment Inventory/ Store Manager	Bob Goble
Safety	Bob Goble
Kit Manager	Shelley Curran
Webpage & Social Media Management	Kathy Bowman

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

Rocket City Jewelers (RCJ) News November 2026



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:** Note: If you're signed up for the Square Cab Wrap Pendant class and haven't made yours yet or picked up your kit, there's 1 more opportunity: **November 18th, from 6-9p**.

Remember: No meeting **November 25th** due to Thanksgiving. No class in December, but we'll have make up time on **December 2nd, from 2-5p**. The holiday party will be on **December 9th,** at 4:30p at Theresa's home. Please respond to Judy' email if you haven't already.

How to Sign Up for Classes

Be sure to sign up at least a month before class. Please pay one month in advance so check in goes smoothly, and we can start class on time. To sign up for a class, please email Theresa at rocketcityjewelers@gmail.com. Include your **name**, **contact info**, the **class(es)** you want, and the date(s) (if you know them) you plan to take them. Or, you can sign up at RCJ meetings and monthly HGMS meetings.

2027 Classes



January: Braided Wire Bracelet with Beads. Kit $5.

Jan 6 & 20: 6 – 9p, class and make up.
Jan 13 & 27: 2 – 5p, class and make up.



February: Celtic Diamond Pendant. Kit $9. Kits are limited. Reserve yours early.
Feb 3 & 17: 6 – 9p, class and make up.
Feb 10 & 24: 2 – 5p, class and make up.



March: LME (Layered Metal Earrings) XI – Sewing with Wire. Kit $5. Create earrings and/or a pendant by sewing pieces of copper together with wire. Note that March has 5 Wednesdays.
Mar 3 & 17: 6 – 9p, class and make up.
Mar 10, 24 & 31: 2 – 5p, class and make up.

Note: Should severe weather occur on any RCJ meeting day, the meeting will be canceled, and members will be notified.

Pebble Pups

November Meeting

Thursday, November 19th - 6:00pm

HGMS Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Road SE
Huntsville, AL 35803





The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies (SFMS) has announced they will be continuing their "Year in Rocks" contest again for 2027. Start thinking about how you can use your rocks, minerals, gems, fossils, or even lapidary equipment to showcase the year 2027 in a way that totally rocks! The deadline for submissions is November 21st, 2026 and you can visit https://www.southeastfed.org/contests-awards/juniors-year-in-rocks-contest for rules and guidelines for entries. All entries must be submitted through Suzanne Miller at hgmspebblepups@gmail.com.

The Pebble Pups are meeting a week early this month – we don't want to compete with Thanksgiving.

Join us as we learn about sand this month. Sand may not look like anything special, but each grain is a piece of Earth's history. Some sand comes from broken rocks and minerals, some from shells and coral, and some from volcanic material.

We will be learning what sand is and how it is formed, how it is classified, common minerals and materials that are found in sand, and what sand can tell us about the places it comes from. We will also be looking deeper at the sand our Pebble Pups have collected and shared to see the differences in different types of sand.

There is more to sand than meets the eye!

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- The most common component of sand is silica.
- Sand is the most mined resource.
- With the right grain size, mineral composition, and humidity levels, sand grains can sing, hum, or squeak when you walk on them.
- Sugar and salt can qualify as "sand" based on their grain size.

Are you or your child interested in learning more about lapidary techniques? The William Holland School of Lapidary Arts has a variety of unique courses to learn traditional techniques, jewelry-making, or more creative outlets like wire-wrapping, beading, or chainmaille. You can visit their website at www.lapidaryschool.org for more information and to register for courses.

The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) sponsors the Future Rockhounds of America (FRA) program for kids under the age of 18. The HGMS Pebble Pups participate in FRA Badge Program. You can check out all the badges that our Pups can earn by visiting their page at https://www.juniors.amfed.org/fra-badge-program/the-badges.

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Pups who complete activities outside of club activities can send an email to HGMSPebblePups@gmail.com to receive credit for their activities. If your Pup would like to share what they have learned, seen, or found with the rest of the group, please let Suzanne Miller know and we can give them time at the beginning of the meeting to talk to the group! Sharing will help Pups earn their presentation and communications badges. Is there a topic your Pup would like to learn more about?



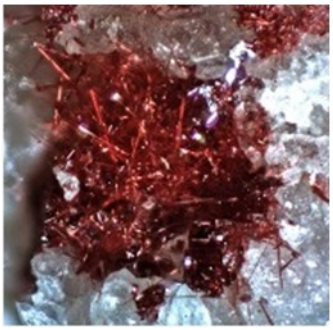
Do you have an idea for an activity that our group would enjoy? Have you found a great place to hunt for rocks, fossils, or gems? Email Suzanne Miller at HGMSPebblePups@gmail.com to share your ideas!



Would you be interested in sharing what you know about rocks, minerals, gems, fossils, or how to find/use them? We would love to have you come lead one of our monthly programs! Please reach out to Suzanne Miller at HGMSPebblePups@gmail.com to discuss.

Mineral of the Month – Cuprite (var. Chalcotrichite)

By Leslie Malakowsky



Chalcotrichite is a rare, acicular (needle-like) variety of the mineral cuprite (copper oxide), Cu_2O. Chalcotrichite occurs as delicate fibrous sprays, mats, or tufts that resemble hair or plush fur. They have a Mohs hardness of 3.5 (harder than calcite) to 4 (as hard as fluorite) making them relatively soft and brittle. Chalcotrichite crystalizes in the isometric (cubic) crystal system (in which each crystal has three axes of equal length that intersect at 90º angles). The crystals can be extremely long and thin or minute rectangles. They can occur in random arrangements, at right angles to each other, or interlocked into dense, felt-like networks. They can range in color from golden yellow, orange, light pink, vivid pink, crimson, ruby red, burgundy, to brownish-red. They can have a silky almost luminous sheen to an adamantine (diamond like) luster. Some crystals have a rainbow luster called *iridescence* caused by exposure to air, moisture, or trace chemicals.



Chalcotrichite is a secondary mineral resulting from the oxidization of copper sulfide in copper deposits. It's frequently found inside small- to medium-size cavities, voids, or pockets inside rocks along with native copper, calcite, malachite, quartz and/or chrysocolla. High-quality chalcotrichite specimens are found in copper mines worldwide, such as the Bisbee, Morenci, and Ray Mines in Arizona, the Tsumeb Mine in Namibia, the Clara Mine in Germany, and the historic copper mines in Cornwall, UK.

No one person is credited for discovering this mineral but it was known to miners in the 18th and early 19th centuries before formal mineral classification was developed. Historically, Chalcotrichite was known as "capillary red oxide of copper", "plush copper ore", or "ruby copper". After cuprite was formally named in 1845, the name *chalcotrichite*, derived from the Greek words *trichos* ("hair") and *chalkos* ("copper"), literally meaning "hairy copper", appeared in German mineralogical literature to describe this variety.

Chalcotrichite is too soft and delicate to be used for jewelry or decorative objects, and it doesn't have any industrial uses, but it's highly prized as a shelf specimen by collectors and museums for its vivid colors and fibrous crystals. When handling this mineral, be careful not to touch the delicate crystals. Don't blow on the crystals to clean away dust or debris because moisture in your breath can damage them. Store the specimen in an acrylic box or storage container away from direct sunlight and heavy foot traffic. For more handling and storage tips, please consult your favorite mineral reference.

This month's mineral was chosen for its beautiful Fall colors and for National Love Your Red Hair (aka National Redhead) Day, an unofficial holiday celebrated annually on November 5th. Unfortunately, there aren't any statistics on how many rockhounds are redheads!

References: *mindat.org*, *britannica.com*, *gia.com*

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





Bench Tips for November

PROBLEMS WITH SMALL DRILLS



Drilling small holes can be a problem. With drills that are less than 1 mm (18 gauge or .040 inches), some chucks will not tighten down well enough to hold the drill securely.

The problem is easily solved in either of two ways - with a chuck adapter or by buying your small drills with a 3/32 inch shank size. Either way you have a large shank to be gripped in your drill press, Foredom or Dremel, so changing bits is fast and easy. .

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MIXING EPOXY

When mixing epoxy, it's important to have the same amount of each component. If the ratio is not 50/50, the mixture will not develop the best strength or may not harden at all.

If the amounts are small, I can generally eye-ball the two components correctly. But I have trouble getting the proper mixture for larger quantities. Trying to pour it into a small measuring cup is a mess.

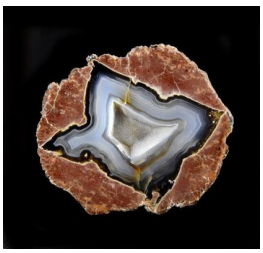
The easiest way I've found to get equal parts is to use a gram scale.
> Put a bottle lid or piece of scrap paper on the scale.
> Zero out the scale.
> Squeeze out the epoxy Part A.
> Note the gram weight.
> Zero out the scale again.
> Squeeze out the same amount of Part B.
> Mix thoroughly for use.

It's a trick I learned while mixing resins for mold making where the ratio is usually 1 to 10



Monthly Rock Swaps - First Monday each Month - December 7

Everyone has fun looking over and trading rocks at the Education Center from 6 to 9 pm. Bring rocks to trade, or just come down to see a lot of interesting rocks. Have yours identified.



Lapidary:

Due to concerns about liability, no one under 19 will be allowed to use the lapidary equipment in the lab. They are still welcome to come in, view what is going on, and participate in the rock swap—with parent's or guardian's supervision.

Cost to use the lab has increased to $1 per hour to ensure funds are available to replace equipment
There is a sign up for the 24" saw and only one (1) cut allowed at a time unless no one else is waiting. We could also use some items if you are so inclined to donate. Dish soap, sponges, and gallon zip lock baggies are needed.

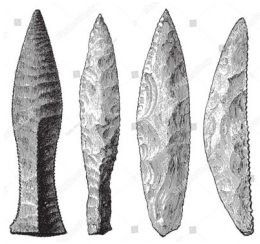
Auction;

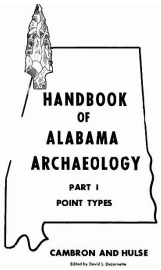
Is your significant other telling you that you have too many rocks? Are you moving and can't take everything with you? Well, it's never too early to make donations for the Spring 2027 club auction.

We will accept any donations of rocks or related equipment. We will even pick it up from you. Just let any officer know you want to donate and we will work with you to get it done.

Available as a Free Download or Purchase:

"Handbook of Alabama Archaeology: Part I, Point Types" by James W. Cambron and David C. Hulse is a scientific publication written in the late 20th century. This handbook serves as a resource for the classification and identification of projectile point types found in Alabama and nearby regions, addressing a significant gap in archaeological knowledge in this area. The work stems from extensive field research and aims to provide a systematic approach to categorizing stone artifacts based on their characteristics and contextual associations. Project Gutenberg



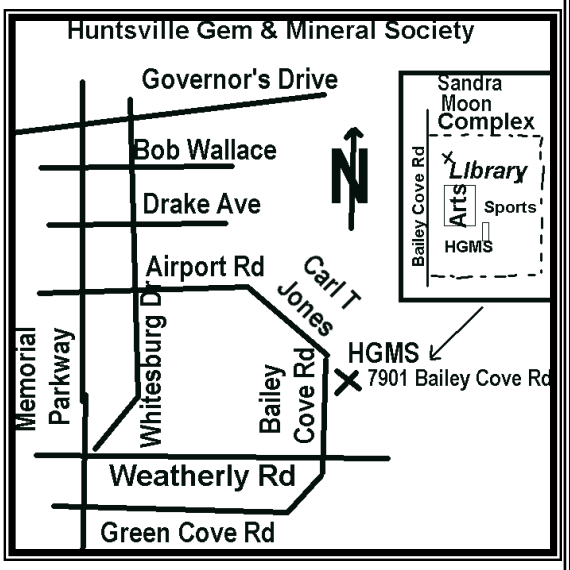


US and International show link Mineral Shows
Southeast Federation show calendar

Some more local shows
Mobile Gem and Mineral Society show: November 27-29
Montgomery Gem and Mineral Society show: December 4-6 Garrett Coliseum, Montgomery, AL
Earth Treasures Gem and Mineral Show December 12-13 Williamson County AG Expo Park, Franklin TN
Knoxville Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show 16–17 November Rothchild Conference Center, Knoxville, TN
Cobb County Mineral Show November 20-22 NO ENTRY FEE Cobb County Civic Center, Marietta, GA

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: Suzanne Miller, Matthew Sager, Theresa Chivers, Dee Dee Morton, Bill Friday

Lapidary
Monday: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Tuesday: 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
and 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Wednesday: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Thursday: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
1st Saturday of the Month: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Metal Smithing / Silver
Monday: 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Thursday: 5:00 PM – 9:00 PM
1st Saturday of the Month: 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM (irregular)
Rocket City Jewelers
1st & 3rd Wednesdays: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
2nd, 4th & 5th Wednesdays: 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM
Rock Swap
1st Monday of the Month: 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Pebble Pups
4th Thursday of the Month: 6:30 PM
Flint Knapping
By appointment
HGMS Meetings
4th Tuesday of the Month: 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM



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 November 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
AFMS: www.amfed.org/news/default.htm

2026 CALENDAR

24 Nov ‘26 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
8 Dec ‘26 - Christmas Dinner - details as it gets closer
- We will have a great potluck dinner again at the Ed Ctr.
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
26 Jan ’27 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
23 Feb 27 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
27 Mar 27 - **SATURDAY** Rock Auction, Education Center 8:00am
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL
27 Apr 27 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm
25 May 27 - Regular HGMS Meeting, Huntsville Gem & Mineral Education Center
7901 Bailey Cove Rd SE, Huntsville, AL 6:00pm

Deadline for Next Newsletter Dec 12

Dated Material
Do not Delay

November 2026

Rocket City Rocks & Gems
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