**MONTGOMERY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY**

**PROGRAM CORNER**

When: March 17, 2015  
Where: Mureal Crump Center, 1751 Congressman William L. Dickinson Drive, Montgomery, AL 36109  
Park in back. Enter through single glass door. Meeting room 1st door to left.  
Time: 7:00 P.M.  
What: GEMSTONES OF AFRICA  
Who: KIM COCHRAN, GA MINERAL SOCIETY

**REFRESHMENTS**

Drinks: JACK & CHRISTIE KIRKLAND  
Snacks: BONNIE & TOMMY SHANKS  
Please remember to bring paper plates, napkins, and cups. Ice is available at the community center. *It is your responsibility to find another member to substitute in the event you are unable to fulfill a month for which you signed up.*  
List for remainder of the year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Drinks</th>
<th>Snacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>MARY BELMONT</td>
<td>FRANKIE BOOTHMAN &amp; VIOLET JONES</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 19</td>
<td>BETTY &amp; JAMES ANDERSON</td>
<td>LESLIE AMATO</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 16</td>
<td>MIKE BERKMAN</td>
<td>LINDA GRIEBEL</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 21</td>
<td>MARY LOU MCHUGH</td>
<td>IRIS MCGEE-HEE</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 18</td>
<td>CHRIS EVEY</td>
<td><strong>VACANT</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 15</td>
<td>CRYSTIE WILLIARD</td>
<td>THERESE FRANK</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 20</td>
<td><strong>VACANT</strong></td>
<td>CANDY RUTHERFORD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 17</td>
<td>JEANETTE RITCH</td>
<td><strong>VACANT</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAY**

11 Jack Kirkland  
13 Mary Lou McHugh  
17 James Anderson  
23 Kailene Antecki  
31 Michael Amato  
11 Vickie Jones  
16 Erin Quijano  
20 Clara Glover  
25 Alex Sideris

Greetings Rock Hounds,

Wow! What a great turnout we had at last month’s meeting along with an informative and interesting presentation on fossil lapidary materials. I would like to welcome all our new members. It may take me a while to get everyone’s names and faces matched. Maybe we should consider name tags. David Sherrod held one cabochon class, but cancelled one Tuesday class due to rain and I did the same for the cold connections class. We will have more sign up opportunities at the March 17 meeting. The weather did not cooperate for the South Carolina trip either. I love digging for treasure, but sitting on cold damp ground at 40 degrees with a wind chill in the teens was too much for even me. Congratulations to the scholarship winners. I know you will enjoy the experience. Spring is around the corner - so it won’t be long before we can get out and exercise with our hammers. I’ve been busy working on an Etsy shop and preparing for 3 upcoming craft shows and David has cabbed so many stones since he got new wheels for his Genie that his fingernails are gone. Terry Fetzer has been working diligently on details for our December show. Thanks, Terry.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at our March 17th meeting, until then....

Rock on,

Morning Sherrod, President

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**Inside this issue:**

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- Birthdays  
- President’s Message  
- Meeting Minutes  
- Showtime  
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- Birthstone  
- Field Trippin’ Reports  
- Bench Tips  
- Chipola Caverns Puzzle  
- Reminders  
- Giant Petrified Log  
- Club Information  

**SPECIAL FEATURES PUZZLE AND PHOTO SECTION**

2015-03  
MARCH 2015

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Meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday each month, at 7:00 p.m. at the Mureal Crump Center, 1751 Congressman William L. Dickinson Drive, Montgomery, AL 36109.

The next meetings will be:

March 17 - 7:00 p.m.  
April 21  
May 19  
June 16  
July 21  
August 18  
September 15  
October 20  
November 17

**SPECIAL FEATURES PUZZLE AND PHOTO SECTION**

7-10

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Still need members to sign up for August and November snacks and for October drinks. Email thegoldennugget@hotmail.com with your selection.
**SHOWTIME SET FOR DECEMBER 4, 5, 6, 2015!**

For those of you who don't know, this year we will be moving the show back to Garrett Coliseum. The dates are December 4\(^{th}\) - 6\(^{th}\), with set-up taking place on the 3\(^{rd}\). Contracts for the show have already been mailed out and we should start receiving some back soon. As always, we'll need the whole club to pitch in and help from planning to breakdown and everything in-between!

You can start helping now by bringing goodies for the "Wheel of Fortune." These include tumbled or un-tumbled rocks, garnets, sharks teeth, small specimens and anything - we can use to fill the bags for "the winners!"

Terry Fetzer  
Show Chairman

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**MONTGOMERY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY FEBRUARY 17, 2015 MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order by president Morning Sherrod. Guests Chris, Pauline, Jeff, and David introduced themselves and expressed their interest in club activities. The minutes from January’s meeting were approved as published in the newsletter and the treasurer’s report given by Iris McGehee was also accepted by a show of hands. Jeff Edwards gave a review of the field trip to Florida State Caverns near Marianna and mentioned it was a well maintained site. Terry Fetzer presented the results of the audit with the result being some found money. Yeah Terry! Everything else was in order. Terry has also accepted the position as chairperson for the upcoming show along with Violet Jones handling the books and David and Morning Sherrod assisting. Terry Fetzer, David Sherrod, and Violet Jones were authorized by vote to sign checks for expenditures related to show expenses. Terry gave information on vendor status and stated that the show will have and admission fee of 2.00$ for adults to help cover coliseum rental cost. The SFMS scholarship winners in the drawing were Violet Jones and Jeanette Ritch with Frankie Boothman being an alternate. Dawn Sullivan, Joanne Staley, Sharon Ervin, Katie Ainsworth, and David Niedrielski were all approved as new members. Congratulations folks! Refreshments were served as everybody settled down for a presentation on fossils that are commonly utilized as lapidary materials given by yours truly. This started with stromatolites and ended with silicated dinosaur bone from Utah. This was followed by discussion a question and answer session. The meeting was then adjourned.  

Secretary David Sherrod

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**Birthstones** From ICA international

The custom of wearing birthstones probably first became popular in Poland in the fifteenth or sixteenth century. For more information about the history of birthstones, try *The Curious Lore of Precious Stones* by George Frederick Kunz, a fascinating compendium of all the powers that have been associated with gemstones through the ages. For example, birthstones originally may have been worn each month by everyone, since the powers of the gemstone were heightened during its month. If that is true, to get the full effect, you need to go out and get a full set of 12 and rotate them each year!

March birthstone:
- Modern birthstone: aquamarine
- Zodiac gemstone for Pisces: amethyst
- Ancient traditional birthstones:
  - Hebrew: bloodstone
  - Roman: bloodstone
  - Arabic: bloodstone
  - Polish: bloodstone
  - Russian: jasper
- Guardian angel: malchediel
- His talismanic stone: ruby

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If you have not paid your membership dues which were due January 1st, please send to: Montgomery Gem & Mineral c/o Iris McGehee at 2433 Upper Wetumpka Road, Montgomery, Alabama 36107 or Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society P.O. Box 3273, Montgomery, AL 36109. Late notices will go out March 15th. If you do not wish to join, please notify by e-mail in order for your name to be deleted from the membership roll. Thanks for your attention to this matter.

Iris McGehee, Treasurer

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THE GOLDEN NUGGET
It was a beautiful day to take a field trip to Florida. The Florida Caverns State Park was more than I was expecting. After a short wait, we were given a quick description of what we would see underground and what was expected from us. As we descended down a rock staircase we entered the cavern. It was dim and you wanted to hold the sides of the cave for balance, but we were told quickly not to! The oils from our hands can destroy the formations. We saw stalactites, stalagmites, flowstone and other fragile cave-drip formations. We saw formations shaped like wedding cakes, walking sticks and ducks. There were also some columns that had "fractures." There were places in the cavern that were very slippery and in some places the ceiling was so low we had to bend down to walk. Words can't describe the beauty of the cavern and I would love to walk through it again. THANKS JEFF, this was a GREAT FIELD TRIP!!

Jeanette Ritch

Cave development in the Florida Caverns State Park is through surficial dissolution within the upper Eocene Crystal River formation of the Ocala Group limestone. The Ocala Limestone is described as “... a densely fossiliferous, white to pale yellow limestone, poorly indurated grainstone. Essentially a coquina of smaller and larger foraminifera, bryozoan, echinoid spines, and brachiopods, all in a matrix of finer-grained, comminuted bioclastic debris.”

The science of Geology is a wordsmith’s dream, with its own unique vocabulary. The Glossary of Geology, by Bates and Jackson, currently lists over 40,000 terms. So let’s try to simplify what is the Ocala Limestone. “Poorly indurated grainstone” means a mud-free, carbonate sedimentary rock weakly consolidated together by cementation. The cement portion of the matrix consists of less than 1% 20 micron sized particles or smaller. The limestone is “essentially a coquina” -- it is detrital based limestone composed primarily of mechanically sorted fossil debris that experienced abrasion and transport prior to deposition. Coquina is mostly commonly regarded as a limestone composed out of small seashells, but it is technically any limestone composed primarily of any type of fossil debris. “...All in a matrix of finer-grained, comminuted bioclastic debris” - the cement portion of the limestone is composed of crushed/ground/powderized fragments and broken pieces of organisms. So the cave development occurred in a poorly consolidated limestone with very little cement portion, that easily erodes under surficial seepage of runoff. The cave types are relatively young, less than 56 million years old, and rare. Their weak structure and matrix lead to their ultimate collapse.

Chris Rutherford
THE GOLDEN NUGGET

BRAD'S BENCH TIPS

TESTING FOR SILVER
With the price of silver as high as it is, jewelry people need to keep their scrap metals sorted. Part of that process is identifying some of those unknown "silvery" pieces in the bottom of the toolbox.
Silver testing solutions can be used to distinguish high silver content alloys like Fine (.999), Sterling (.925) and Coin (.900) from alloys that have the same appearance but no silver content, like German Silver or Nickel.
I purchased a half-ounce bottle of JSP Silver Testing Solution #GT41 for $3. With a fresh solution you have an instant reaction after applying it to the metal being tested. Procedure is simple - as you apply a small drop, look 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:
- Fine silver             Red/Orange
- Sterling silver         Brick Red
- 80% silver 20% copper   Dark red changing to gray
- 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. Always have a solution of baking soda and water handy to neutralize acid. Wash and clean up well when you're done.

WINDING JUMP RINGS
Whenever 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, howelite, etc.
If you're unsure about the hardness of your wheels, test them on a piece of glass. Glass is about 5½ 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 (blog link follows) http://www.blogtalkradio.com/whaleystudios/2013/01/10/metalsmith-benchtalk-with-brad-smith-of-bench-tips

 Chipola Caverns created by Chris Rutherford
“When the Park Ranger told us to watch our step, he should have said...”

Unscramble each of the clue words.

DASHY
POHPYC
RUTDEO
TINH6K
PULM

Unscramble each of the clue words.
An excellent publication designed especially for young mineral collectors is Mini Miners Monthly. Check it out at www.diamonddg publications.net

Electronic subscription (PDF) $9.95 for 12 issues.

A fun website to check out is http:// www.pinterest.com/nkarod/rocks-and-minerals/

**SE SHOWS**

http://www.rockngem.com/show-dates-display/?ShowState=ALL

*March 28 & 29; Lexington, KY Clarion Hotel, 1950 Newton Pike  Sat 10-6, Sun 11-5  
$2 Adults, $1 Children, $5 Max Family  Jane Volk, lexgemshow@outlook.com or www.bggamc.home stead.com.

April 25 & 26, Memphis, TN  Memphis International Agricenter, 7777 Walnut Grove Rd.  Sat 9-6; Sun 10-5, Adults $5, 2 day pass $8.00, Children 12 & under $2.00.  www.The Ea rthWideOpen.com  info@theearthwideopen.com James Butchko 901 743-0058   WC McDaniel 901-274-7706

Here is a photo of a giant petrified log found in Mississippi. It’s an old picture, but this is one of the biggest and longest ever found in the eastern U. S. The crane operator got a bit careless and broke one end off. The man on the truck is pointing his finger, apparently warning him to be careful. Contributed by John Martin

**REMINDE**

- Please let Mary Belmont or Virginia Webb know if a member needs a get well card or any other communication for which a card is appropriate.
- Bring spare rocks, gems, minerals to any meeting in order to prepare for the Wheel of Fortune.
- Show your recent acquisitions at the monthly meeting so other members can experience a variety of different materials.
- **NOTE: the shop can be opened on Saturdays 1-4 by appointment with Leslie Amato.—Call by Friday afternoon to determine if Saturday is convenient.**  Shop fee: $1 per hour or $5 maximum.
- Be sure to read your monthly copy of the LODESTAR which is emailed.
- Member input is not only desired but also needed. Communicate program requests to Peggy Raines. Tell Jeff Edwards if you know of a potential site for a field trip. Talk to any officer or board member regarding the need for a class.

**LINKS TO CHECK OUT**

- International Colored Gemstone Assn newsletter  http://www.gemstone.org/
- Georgia Meteorite Association  http://www.meteoriteassociationofgeorgia.org/
- William Holland  www.lapidaryschool.org
- Wildacres  http://www.amfed.org/sfms/wildacres-retreat.html
- FL Museum Natural History (fossils)  http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/collections/overview/
- AMERICAN LANDS ACCESS ASSOCIATION, INC. (Protecting the Public Lands for the Public; A grassroots 501 C-4 Educational, non-profit organization dedicated to keeping public lands open for the public  http://www.amlands.org/
- Gemstone List  http://www.gemstonelists.com/
- SMITHSONIAN  http://www.mnh.si.edu/
- Gemstones International  http://www.gia.edu/  http://www.gia.edu/

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A fun website to check out is http:// www.pinterest.com/nkarod/rocks-and-minerals/
The purpose of the Golden Nugget is to inform members of news about gems and minerals along with news about club, state, and regional activities of interest to our members. Most important, the Golden Nugget provides a way for each of us to share information about projects and to pass on tips that will help others enjoy our hobby. Unless members are willing to contribute, the Golden Nugget cannot meet this latter purpose.

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Meetings of the Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society are held every 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Mureal Crump Adult Center, 1751 Congressman William L. Dickinson Drive (U.S. 231), Montgomery, AL 36109.

The annual gem show replaces the December meeting. Anyone interested in gems and minerals is invited to attend. Field trips, workshops, and classes are held at various locations. These are announced at monthly meetings. Membership dues are $15.00 for individuals and $20.00 for families residing in the same household.

The Montgomery Gem & Mineral Society is a member of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.

In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. section 107, this material is distributed without profit or payment to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving this information.
At the February meeting, David Sherrod amazed attendees with his vast collection of fossilized lapidary materials, passing around slabs and finished cabs as he talked about all of the possibilities that could be used.

A few of my photos from the Florida Caverns field trip (Linda)

Had to wait for group tour since it was busy that day
See the bat?
CAVERN WORDSEARCH

AQUIFER  BAT  BUMP  CAVE  COLUMN  CYPRESS  DAMP  DARK  FLOWSTONE  HIKE  OUCH  PILLAR  RANGER  RIMPOOL  SINKHOLE  SLIP  STALACTITE  STALAGMITE  TRAIL  TRIP  WHOOPS

CREATED BY Chris and Candace Rutherford
Chris Rutherford sent this into the newsletter:

THE ALABAMA GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
With THE ALABAMA PALEONTOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Will hold a one-day workshop
8 a.m., Saturday, March 21, 2015
at the Steven C. Minkin Paleozoic Footprint Site (formerly called the Union Chapel fossil site) which contains many fossils including vertebrate and invertebrate trace fossils and plant fossils. There is an exceptional assemblage of Pennsylvanian-age trace fossils preserved in a tidal mud flat deposit.

The mine has yielded thousands of vertebrate trackways, making it the most prolific Carboniferous trackway site in the world. This abandoned coal mine spans 32 acres that are now owned by the State of Alabama. During the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to examine a broad range of trace fossils, fossil plants, and fossil invertebrates.

Much of the day will be spent finding and identifying samples in the mine spoils. We hope this will help broaden the knowledge of geologists and that the number of geologists using this site in the future will increase.

For additional information, contact Richard Carroll 205 247-3551 (rcarroll@gas.state.al.us)
Registration is $50.00 for AGS members and $75.00 for nonmembers (payable to Alabama Geological Society). Please print information below and mail to the Alabama Geological Society, P. O. Box 866184 , University, Alabama 35486. Snacks and lunch will be provided. Site information will be sent to participants. Early registration is highly recommended.

Name ___________________________ ___________________________ ___________________________
(Last)_______________________________(First)________________________(MI)______
Affiliation ________________________________
Mailing Address ________________________________
Phone ____________________________

TERRY FETZER SHARED HIS
PHOTOS OF THE CAVERNS.
Jeanette Ritch took these photos at Florida Caverns