

Lowcountry Diggings

AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY BULLETIN PUBLISHED BY THE LOWCOUNTRY GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Volume LIII Number 3

Founded April 1969

March 2025

PRESIDENT RAMBLINGS

By Olivia Cramer, President



BIRTHSTONE FOR MARCH

By Will Postell

Happy March Everyone,
Spring is almost here and we at the LGMS are thrilled for longer days and some warmer weather. After Mark's incredible slideshow last month covering his dig in Bancroft, Ontario, Canada with friends, I know that everyone is now inspired to get outside and explore. To get you even more in the spirit, new member and geologist, Doran Adams, will be presenting "Digging 52 Million Year Old Fish Fossils (and more!) in southwest Wyoming" at our March meeting on, March 13th from 6:30-8 pm. He will even be bringing some fish fossils to offer as door prizes to those in attendance so be sure to put it on your calendar.

We have been so lucky to welcome very enthusiastic new members over the last year who have very quickly jumped into the fold of the LGMS. Thank you all so much for sharing your knowledge and excitement with the group. We are thrilled to have you and please feel free to invite anyone you think would be interested to a meeting. The more the merrier! See you all on the 13th!

Olivia

It is March! What a fantastic choice of two traditional birthstones available with that of bloodstone and aquamarine. This month I will focus on bloodstone. Bloodstone (SiO₂) is a cryptocrystalline (microscopically small crystals) variety of quartz (chalcedony). Bloodstone is a bright colorful dark green stone with the presence of impurities of about 15 percent or more of an iron oxide known as hematite - a principle ore of iron.

The hematite impurity gives bloodstone beautiful and numerous red-speckled dots resembling spots of blood causing many to call it "the stone of martyrs." The English and Europeans still refer to bloodstone by another name - heliotrope, from the Greek word "helio" meaning "sun" or "the gem that turns the sun." It has been very popular for carvings and sculpturing of the crucifixion of Jesus on the cross. Bloodstone is also very popular when carved with a design or figure set in bezels, fashioned into men's signet rings, and cut "en cabochon" for bolos, belt buckles, or simply with a flat cut bringing out its best qualities. For whatever obscure reason, some men do not feel it is appropriate for a woman to wear bloodstone. Today, however, very good to excellent quality bloodstone is getting hard to find. There have been no manmade equivalents of bloodstone to date.

Bloodstone dates back to the Greek and Roman times when this stone was also drilled and carved into cameos and numerous ornamental objects. In the trade, the term "blood jasper" is sometimes used. Bloodstone, however, is not really jasper at all, even though a radical structure with spherical aggregates can simulate a grainy appearance. Although the colors are not always constant, but on rare occasions it can be about 50% color red and 50% color green. This could be due to a larger ab-

see *Birthstone* (Continued on page 2)



2025 SFMS WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Website address:

www.sfmsworkshops.org website

Wildacres September 15-21, 2025

William Holland June 8-13, 2025

Next Meeting and Program -- Thursday, 13 March 2025

Our newest member and geologist, Doran Adams, will be presenting "Digging 52 Million Year-Old Fish Fossils (...and More!) in Southwest Wyoming"

We meet on **Thursday, 13 March 2025** at the **Redux Contemporary Art Center, 1056 King Street** in Charleston. The fellowship begins at 6:30 P.M. with the business meeting at 7:00 P.M. Doran's fossil fish program will follow the business meeting. We hope to see you there!

March Birthdays!



6	HEATHER HARRISS
8	CLAUDIA HUCKS
17	BRETT KNEISLEY
18	DARCY MAHAN
24	ROSSANA LAWRENZI
25	FLIP SOUDERS

Birthstone (Continued from page 1)

sorption of iron oxide. The green color is a result of chlorite particles or an inclusion of hornblende needles. Bloodstone has a hardness of 6.5 and about 2½ times as heavy as water.

The most important deposits are more likely to be found in India, but also locations of interest in Australia, Brazil, China, Germany, and the United States.

Sources: *Field Guide to Rocks & Minerals* by Bishop, *Gems* by Dennis, *Gem Stones of the World* by Schumann, *Rocks & Minerals* by Pellant, *Minerals & Gemstones* by O'Donoghue... Will



HUMOR IN MINERALOGY

Almosthadite - refers to a specimen of which the major portion remains on public display in a remote quarry.

Cantrememberite - one of the more common specimens typically from locations generally unknown at the present time.

Droppedite - a collection of cleavage fragments representing a high quality cabinet specimen formerly on display.

Nolabelite - one of a class of minerals or fossils of relatively little value appearing in most private collections.

Cantquitespellite - resembles a specimen in the University collection with an even longer and more complex name.

Oncehadite - used in reference to extremely unusual specimens traded at rock shows before true identity was realized.

Usedtohavite - a secondary form of specimens including marcasite, best recognized by the permanent brown ring where the specimens formerly sat on the shelf.

Source: *Rocky Mountain Federation News*, 3/2003; via *Rimstones Review*, 3&4/2003; and via *Lowcountry Diggings*, 3/2015

FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES Acting Secretary Olivia Cramer



A meeting of the Lowcountry Gem and Mineral Society was called to order at approximately 7:05 pm on 13 February 2025... There were 11 members (three of them were new to the club and one member returned to meetings after five years) and one visitor present. Thank you all so much for coming... The January meeting minutes were approved by the quorum of members present.

Sunshine Report: No report.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Mark Easterbrook reported nine paid memberships since the January meeting

Programs: At the January meeting, Olivia presented a couple of video programs on garnet hobby mining. For tonight's meeting, Mark Easterbrook presents on a dig that he went on with three friends from Louisville, KY to Bancroft, Ontario, Canada in 2004. It was great to see all of these slides, hear his fantastic stories of the adventure, and to get to see some of the specimens from the trip.

Field Trips: Kristin resent the email about the special SFMS Florida trip to the Lake Okeechobee area for fossilized clam shells with calcite in April and we also talked about the LaGrange field trip in Georgia on March 8th... The February DMC field trip to Hiddenite, NC is on the 15th (email sent out to the members previously).

Old Business: The Lowcountry Diggings articles and information are due February 21st for the March *Lowcountry Diggings* newsletter... FAQ Page - Olivia and Kristin will create a list of questions for an FAQ page on our website.

New Business: The club website domain will be renewing soon. Kristin will pay and pass along the invoice for reimbursement... The club is considering a Yard Sale for our members to include tools, stones, fossils, etc.

Door prizes were awarded... The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 pm followed by Mark's slide presentation program... The next meeting is scheduled for 13 March 2025 at the Redux Art Center, as usual.

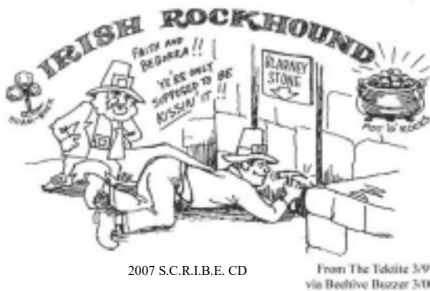


AMERICAN FEDERATION NEWS

Edited By Mark Easterbrook



Here are some highlights of the latest news of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS) from the March 2025 AFMS Newsletter... AFMS President JC Moore discusses the empty committee chairs that need to be filled among other issues... Cheryl Neary discusses plans for the upcoming convention at the end of March in Hickory, North Carolina... The Eastern Federation has an article about 'Wildacres Workshop Experience'... AFMS Junior Programs Chair, Lora Hall, continues to spread the word about AFMS Future Rockhounds of America programs... The AFMS Scholarship Foundation is looking for a treasurer... The 2025 AFMS Convention is being held in Hickory, NC March 27-30, 2025... More AFMS Rockhound of the Year recipients are announced... Ellery Borow, AFMS Safety Chair, has an article about safety in numbers... Upcoming federation shows and conventions are presented... Read the current AFMS Newsletter on their website; just click address (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1griC-6PkTsfEdrRaW-2dkIzqilYfzaKN/view>) for more information. *Mark*



BEADS AND BRUSHSTROKES LOCAL CLASSES

Monthly Classes

2nd and 4th Thursdays, Beginning Beading Classes

5:00-6:30 Thursday evenings; cost is \$25.00. Janice will teach basic beading techniques and create earrings and a bracelet/necklace, as well as crimping and wire-wrapping.

2nd Saturday, Metalsmithing Guild "Smithettes"

1:30-6:00 pm monthly on Saturdays. For cost and more information, please call Debbie Gates at (843) 607-3437.

SOUTHEAST FEDERATION NEWS

Edited By Mark Easterbrook



The March 2025 SFMS Lodestar has the latest available information... 2025 SFMS President Lisa Roberts discusses her upcoming activities, the AFMS National and Convention in late March, and the SFMS workshops among others... SFMS 1st Vice President Jason Hamilton addresses the need for a new SFMS secretary and future rockhound roundups... Education Chair Danny Griffin discusses a fantastic New Mexico fundraiser opportunity for the SFMS workshops, a scenic geology train ride... Updates on SFMS lapidary schools are provided by the SFMS William Holland Director and SFMS Wildacres Director... David Liles in his 'Rock Corner' has an interesting article on 'Growing Bismuth Crystals'... SFMS Youth Coordinator Chair Nancy Roberts discusses fluorescent minerals... SFMS Safety Chair Bob Green says to be keenly aware of the hazards that the use of a ladder presents... Regional club show information is presented... Please see the current SFMS website for more information at www.southeastfed.org/newsletter...

Mark

REGIONAL CLUB SHOW INFORMATION

March 15-16, 2025. GASTONIA, NC: Gaston Gem and Mineral Club Annual Show. Location: Gastonia Farmer's Market. For information on website: gastongemclub.weebly.com/

April 12, 2025. APOPKA, FL: Wekiva Gem & Mineral Society "Circle Up Swap Meet". Location: 1937 Lakeville Road Apopka FL. For more information contact Nancy Allman, 407-739-0051 or Email to faceittoday@gmail.com

April 26, 2025. MARIETTA, GA: Cobb County Gem and Mineral Society Annual Spring Rock Show and Swap. Location: 516 West Atlanta Street, Marietta, GA. For information, check the website: www.ccgms.org

April 26-27, 2025. ORLANDO, FL: Central Florida Mineral & Gem Society Annual Show. Location: Florida National Guard Armory. For information, refer to the website: Website: <https://cfmgs.org/>

Happy St. Patrick's Day

DIXIE MINERAL COUNCIL ~~XXXXXX~~ FIELD TRIP



An Official Field Trip of the XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXX) as host and an Official Field Trip of XXX XXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

WHERE: Bayou Pierre, Hazlehurst, Copiah County, MS

WHEN: XXXXXXXX, XXXXXXXXXXX XXXXX XXXXXXXX

LIMIT: 40 People

REGISTRATION: Registration Required

FEE: None

TRIP: The Bayou Pierre River is a tributary to the Mississippi River, joining the mighty muddy near Port Gibson. The field trip site is on the eastern portion of the river. Don't be misled by the name "Bayou." It's a free-flowing river. Native Americans lived in villages near the river before European settlers migrated to the area.

COLLECTING: Extensive deposits of Citronelle Formation gravel are exposed in the stream bed and along the banks of the Bayou Pierre River as it meanders through rural Copiah County, Mississippi. Expect to find agates (photo above courtesy of host club), petrified wood, fossil brachiopods, bryozoans, coral, crinoid stems, and other gravel.

BRING: Bring lunch and plenty of water. Bring a bucket, backpack or bags in which to collect rocks. A garden wagon or bucket on wheels will make it easier to haul your collected rocks back to your vehicle. Bring a lightweight chair and beach umbrella for shade during breaks. Wear shoes or boots suited for walking on sand and, if you go near the river bank, mud. Bring sunscreen and insect repellent, and wear a hat. There are no facilities at the river.



Full trip announcement and registration information was previously sent to the club membership.

IMPORTANT: DMC field trips are open only to members of clubs in the SFMS DMC field trip sharing program. SFMS DMC club members are covered by liability insurance and they are bound by the AFMS code of ethics, but the general public is not and could jeopardize access to a collecting location. So, unless the property owner has invited non-SFMS attendees, the general public is not allowed on DMC field trips. Please do not post DMC field trip information where the general public can access it.



THE BLARNEY STONE



The **Blarney Stone** (Irish: *Cloch na Blarnan*) is a block of bluestone built into the battlements of Blarney Castle, Blarney, about 8 kilometers (5 mi) from Cork, Ireland. According to legend, kissing the stone endows the kisser with *the gift of gab* (great eloquence or skill at flattery). The stone was set into a tower of the castle in 1446. The castle is a popular tourist site in Ireland, attracting visitors from all over the world to kiss the stone and tour the castle and its gardens. It is the light bluestone...

Source: [Yellowstone Deposit](#), 3/2011; via [Lowcountry Diggings](#), 3/2017



HOBBY HINTS - TIN OXIDE, ACID, GIVE RHODOCHROSITE POLISH

By Bob Daniel

When cutting Rhodochrosite, it is important that only water be used in the saw. An oil based product will be absorbed and the stone's color deadened.

After the material is ground to form, sand first on 220 grit, wet, then on 400 grit, wet. For best results use worn sanding cloths.

Tin oxide is perhaps the best polishing agent for rhodochrosite. Some lapidaries report good results from tin oxide that has been mixed with a small amount of vinegar and used on a felt wheel.

Another method is to mix two teaspoons of tin oxide and one level teaspoon of oxalic acid in half a pint of water and use on a leather buff. In this formula, be sure that not more than a third by volume of acid to tin oxide is used or the stone will be damaged. This also works well on marble.

Source: Via S.C.R.I.B.E CD 2005, via [Council Reporter](#), 1/ 2001; via [Rocky Rollers](#), 3/2001; via [Rockcollector](#), 4/2001; and, via [The Rock-A-Teer](#), 3/2005



American Federation of Mineralogical Societies



Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies

Club Meeting Dates and Reminders

Club Meeting Dates in 2025:

January 9	June 12
February 13	September 11
March 13	October 9
April 10	November 13
May 8	December 11

Reminder: The newsletter submission deadline is the 21st of each month and the publication date is the 6th of each month. The newsletter is not published in July and August.

The **Lowcountry Diggings** is a monthly publication of the Lowcountry Gem & Mineral Society. We are a founding member of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.; affiliate of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Membership dues: Individual - \$15, Couples/Families - \$30, Junior - \$7 (payable by no later than December 31).

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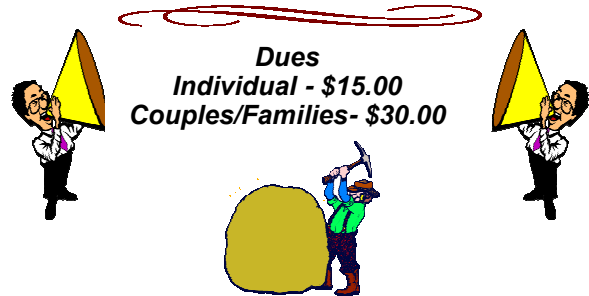
BULLETIN AWARDS

2013 AFMS - 1 st Place (Mini)	2008 SFMS - 1 st Place (Mini)
2008 AFMS - 1 st Place (Mini)	2004 SFMS - 1 st Place (Mini)
2004 AFMS - 1 st Place (Mini)	2003 SFMS - 2 nd Place (Small)
2003 AFMS - 7 th Place (Small)	2002 SFMS - 3 rd Place (Small)
2002 AFMS - 7 th Place (Small)	2001 SFMS - 1 st Place (Small)
1998 AFMS - 6 th Place (Small)	1998 SFMS - 3 rd Place (New/Small)

The Lowcountry Gem & Mineral Society of Charleston, South Carolina (LGMS) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. The society was chartered in South Carolina on April 8, 1969. The Lowcountry Gem and Mineral Society was established in order to allow its members to gain knowledge and skills in gem-cutting, jewelry-making, identifying minerals and fossils, and evaluating lapidary materials. Through field trips, exhibitions, and cooperation with other societies, we endeavor to further not only our own knowledge, but also that of the general public.

The society is a founding member of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. and an affiliate of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.

Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month except for July and August. Fellowship starts at 6:30 P.M. followed by the meeting at 7 P.M.



Dues
Individual - \$15.00
Couples/Families- \$30.00

2025 OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President Olivia Cramer.....	247-3414
Vice-President Kristin Mein.....	703-507-7696
Secretary Lila Neumeyer	
Treasurer Mark Easterbrook.....	276-4016
Programs Olivia Cramer.....	247-3414
Budget Chairperson Mark Easterbrook.....	276-4016
Public Relations Chair Katie Reed.....	319-9465
Field Trip Chairperson Mark Easterbrook.....	276-4016
By-Laws Chairperson Mark Easterbrook.....	276-4016
Membership Chairperson Ken Brenneman.....	556-3127
Newsletter Editor Mark Easterbrook.....	276-4016
Nominating Chairperson Ken Brenneman.....	556-3127
State Director Liaison Mark Easterbrook.....	276-4016

For submissions to **Lowcountry Diggings**, you can either e-mail the editor (Mark Easterbrook) or send them by the 21st of the month to either snail mail address:

Lowcountry Diggings	LGMS Annual Dues
c/o Mark Easterbrook	c/o Mark Easterbrook
P.O. Box 41535	6701 Dorchester Road, Apt. 1007
North Charleston, SC 29423	North Charleston, SC 29418

Email submissions should be put into the body of your email and submitted by the 21st of the month.

Home Telephone: (843) 276-4016 (cell)

Email: asgardsgc@earthlink.net

Webmaster: Kristin Mein - kaypeajewelry@gmail.com

Club Email: lowcountrygms@gmail.com

URL Web Page: www.lowcountrygms.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/LowcountryGemandMineral/



President: Olivia Cramer - (843) 247-3414

**Lowcountry Gem & Mineral Society
Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies
American Federation of Mineralogical Societies**

**LOWCOUNTRY DIGGINGS
c/o Mark Easterbrook, Editor
P.O. Box 41535
Charleston, SC 29423**

**FIRST CLASS MAIL
Address Correction Requested**

**Please remember to submit your articles by the 21st of each month
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