

Official Monthly Publication of the  
Alabama Mineral & Lapidary Society  
Birmingham, Alabama

Website: <https://www.lapidaryclub.com>

President AMLS

Sandra Sullivan



## Presidents Message

Hello Folks,

I hope this finds all well and staying sane during our current conditions. Yes, we are still a rock club! We just haven't been able to meet lately or do our regular outings or shows. This is a real bummer for sure.

Due to having an eye problem, I have not been on my computer as much lately. This is why you haven't heard from me. Our most valuable man on our team, Mr. John Wild has really stepped up and helped out. I have been trying to get things together for us but he has been the one to do them. Here is his message for you.

Hey Everybody!

I wanted to take a minute to bring AMLS club members up to date.

During the Covid – 19 crisis, we have all had to endure a lot of changes to our routines and some of you may have lost jobs or paychecks. To this point, I have not heard of any of our members that have become sick and for that we are very thankful. As attempts are made to reopen the economy, I urge everyone to continue the habits that have proven to make a difference....washing our hands and social distancing.

We have been forced to cancel our April meeting and we will also cancel the May meeting that was to be scheduled for this Friday. When it is considered safe to meet in groups again, we will give plenty of notice so we can celebrate together.

This pandemic is also going to require AMLS to cancel our June show at Oak Mountain State Park. We are looking at future dates in the Fall to re-schedule this event. We are tentatively considering the weekend of 10/23/20 as a possibility for our Rock show, but nothing is written in stone (pun intended). If we can get our monthly meetings back on track, we have several programs lined

*Message from John Wild Continued...* up for July, August and September that should be entertaining and informative.

If you have any questions, suggestions, or other feedback, please don't hesitate to let us know.

Thanks, John

## Oak Mtn June

Club Events <[events4amls@gmail.com](mailto:events4amls@gmail.com)>

To: Club Events

I am sorry to announce that we at AMLS have decided to cancel our June Show at Oak Mountain this year. With the stay at home still being suggested, and gatherings over 10 not allowed, we do not see a way to have this show. For those who have paid already, I will be contacting you separately about refunds.

We are looking into a fall show, most likely at the end of October. As I learn more, I will share and keep you in the loop.

I do hope everyone is safe and well. I will miss seeing you in June, but I hope by staying safe, we can see each other in the fall.

Cathy Kellogg, Show Chairwoman

## *Our last gathering ...*

We had very few members to brave the elements to gather at the church on Friday the 13th of March. Only eleven members came to hear a wonderful presentation made member Bill Fowler. More on that later. We had plenty of food to go around and we used only one room because of the few number. Yes, we are all scared of this new thing called Covid 19. Let's not allow it to rule our lives just to add new ways of continuing.

### Brad Smith's Bench Tips ~

In addition, you might be interested in an experiment we did yesterday with my rock club. At the request of local authorities, we had to close down all club activities several weeks ago. But as the date for our April meeting grew near, and with no end in sight to the quarantine situation, we decided to experiment with the idea of a virtual meeting.

So last night the Culver City, CA club held its first ever online meeting. Members were able to communicate via cell phone, laptop, tablet or desktop. After a quorum of members signed on, we had a quick business meeting followed by a slide show of Death Valley historic mining & collecting sites.

We did this via Zoom.com which allows up to a hundred people to participate in a 40 minute chat free of charge. Simply download the app from Google Store or Apple Store and you're ready to go. Tutorials are available at zoom.com or youtube.com. We found it useful to have one person act as the tech for the meeting and control the sequence of speakers. When we ran out of time, we simply opened a second session and continued with the 140 slides.

See the result on our Facebook page -

<https://www.facebook.com/CCRMC/posts/10158383154896098>

Best to all, Brad

### DRILLING SMALL ITEMS

Small pieces need to be held securely while drilling to prevent them from spinning if the drill catches. Having sliced my fingers occasionally in my younger days, I avoid band-aids now by using flat-jaw pliers or a ring clamp. Pliers also save you if the piece gets hot. Put a little tape or a piece of vinyl tubing over jaws of the pliers if needed to avoid scratches.



### DRILLING A STONE

One of the things my students often ask to do is drill a hole through a piece of gemstone. The usual thought is to get a diamond drill, but I've been disappointed with them. I think the reason is that the tip of the drill is just pivoting in the hole and fails to cut well. When it looks like the drill isn't cutting, the tendency is to push with more force. The drill gets hot, and the diamond grit falls off.

A much better approach is to use a core drill. This is a small hollow tube with a coating of diamond grit at the business end. The diamonds easily carve out a circular arc without undue pressure or heat buildup.

Core drills are readily available from lapidary and jewelry supply companies. They come in sizes as small as 1mm and are very reasonable in price. For instance, a 2mm diameter drill is about \$7.

Chuck the core drill in a drill press, Dremel or Fore-dom and be sure to keep the drilling zone wet to cool the tool and to flush out debris. Also, if you're drilling a through hole, go very easy on the pressure as the drill is about to cut through. Otherwise you will usually chip off some of the stone surface around the hole.



### OUR APRIL AUCTION ~

Any suggestions about how we can do the auction would be appreciated at this time. I know many really get a kick out of these events. Besides picking up some great materials to work with, we have other rockhound related items too. I have already started collecting things for when we can do our auction. In the past years we have had plants, household items, and other crazy items to show up. Let's just keep related to our hobby for now please. S.S.

## SFMS June Meeting - Cancelled

Hi All:

As we are all well aware, the Corona Virus Pandemic has thrown a wrench into everyone's lives. With regard to the SFMS, the summer meeting previously scheduled at William Holland in June, has been cancelled. All classes have been cancelled there through June. We have been offered an option to reschedule the Workshops in November, but it's anyone's guess if that will come to pass.

Because of the travel, meeting and safety restrictions imposed on all of us in this current situation, it is unlikely that we will have any meeting this summer. We will keep you updated as the situation changes.

Stay safe out there, hunker down and maintain social distance.

Jerri Heer

SFMS Secretary

419-344-9999



The SFMS newsletter is a very informative way to keep in touch with what is happening across our federation. It has been suggested we forward this periodical onto our membership as editors. You may sign up to receive it directly if you choose. Please go to the website for the SFMS and download this month's issue. In it you will get a better picture of what the southeast is doing. I will try to attach it to this email.

Thank you, Sandra



### Minutes of the March 13, 2020 Meeting

John Gaston said the blessing and then we had a wonderful dinner, plenty of food. A special thanks go out to Niki Lee Hurst for setting up the table and food for us.

Bill Fowler did our program of ***“What else you can do with your Brookwood Pebbles!”*** The Brookwood pebbles can be glued together to make Sun Catchers.



Clear glass lamps can be used to display good pebbles too. He displayed his lamps with arrowheads in it.

The lamp he made from scratch was a very impressive piece. Bill explained how he did it with a lot of care in picking just the right

rock to go in the right place. Some of the products he used was a glue that didn't dry until sprayed with an accelerant. The product was made by the BSI Co. or the Bob Smith Industries and it is called Insta-Set Accelerator (SKU # 1559020) and can be bought at Hobby Lobby. Glass stain glass putty stays wet for a long time and you can reposition pieces as needed if this product is used. Polymer clay was suggested. A higher wattage light was also another idea for getting it harder quicker. Bill used a clear glass globe to cover an object for display to use as a base for the main structure. John Gaston said he had untumbled Brookwood gravel and others brought some too for giving away.

John Wild brought his Harbor Freight small tumbler to show us. John had the grits along side of the tumbler and mentioned the Brookwood Tumbling Contest in May. **(CANCELED)** John Wild talked about the rock sale at John Gaston's home the next day. The meeting adjourned then.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Sullivan



## American Federation of Mineralogical Societies News:



The American Federation has a program called “Rockhound of the Year” where clubs across the country can honor a member or a couple who have been a great asset to their organization. You can also honor a junior member. All it takes is to submit a short write up about the member you wish to recognize and how they have been a service to the club. This is a great way to give a fellow member a pat on the back and say “Thank You” for a job well done. I think it’s about time that NMGMS honors some of its hard working members. Think about who should be recognized and write down a few lines that can be submitted.

Nancy Roberts

In the April 2020 issue of the AFMS newsletter, Volume 73, Number 3, the AFMS historian, Jennifer Haley, mentioned an ad she saw on TV that highlighted the groups on Facebook that had “rock” in their name. I looked up Rockhound Groups on FB, and there are quite a few. Some of them look like a very helpful resource for specimen ids, places to collect, a place to buy and sell, etc. Check them all out and be proud you are a Rockhound! Submitted by Nancy Roberts

To view the TV ad: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0uYOOTz6kk>

For more AFMS Federation news, please check out their website: <http://www.amfed.org/>

To read the AFMS newsletter: [http://www.amfed.org/afms\\_news.htm](http://www.amfed.org/afms_news.htm)

[www.nmgms.org](http://www.nmgms.org) Page 11 NMGMS PO Box 1445  
Tupelo, MS 38802

Please except my apologies for the much shortened version of the newsletter. After having to redo my corrections many times, I decided to just make contact with our membership as suggested.

If you have any comments, please call me 205-903-7062. Thank you, Sandra Sullivan

## Minutes for AMLS board meeting May 1, 2020 on Zoom

In attendance were Sarah Grace Landis, John Wild, Reggie and Bunny Bolton, and Sandra Sullivan.

John has been talking to Dream Gate Events about indoor venues for a fall show, The Siluria Post Office and Oxmoor Valley Community Center are probably too small. Pelham Civic Center is too expensive. Venue 31 on Lee Street behind Harbor Freight, across 31 from Olde Time Pottery in Pelham is a possibility. Having it at Oak Mountain is also on the table. After much research October 23rd seems to be the best bet. There aren't conflicting shows nearby except Franklin, NC. We can have a tent at the Fall Festival at Oak Mountain the previous weekend to pass out flyers and stir up interest. Since we did not have a quorum a vote could not be taken so other board members need to let us know their opinions, objections, and other input. Another Zoom meeting can be scheduled if necessary. Sandra will send out an email to the membership letting them know about the June show cancellation and what we are looking at going forward and maybe a Rockhound Roundup soon. It's also possible to have a club meeting on Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Bunny Bolton, Recording Secretary

## Happy Mother's Day To all our mothers



My face in the mirror  
Isn't wrinkled or drawn  
My house isn't dusty  
The cobwebs are gone  
My garden looks lovely  
And so does my lawn

I think I might never  
Put my glasses back on!

(from Reminisce Magazine)

Magic Valley Gem News — July, 2011 Volume 50  
Issue 7 — Page 4