

# ROCKHOUND ROUNDUP



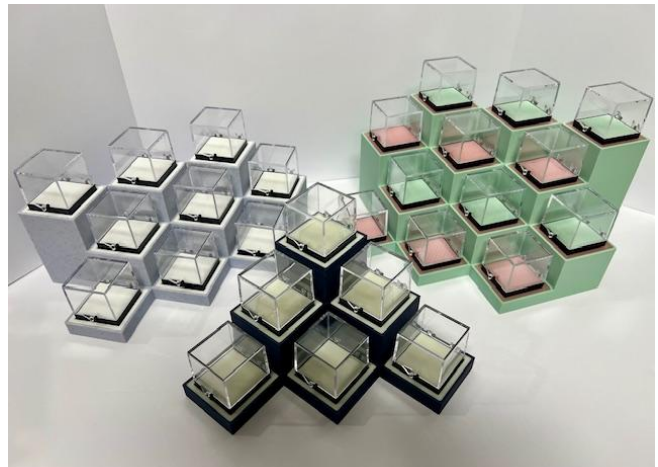
APRIL 2026

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## Spotlight

***Come show your support this Friday at the annual Club Auction! The gavel drop starts at 6:30pm.***



*Mineral display stands will be up for auction.*



*A sneak peek at more of the items that will hit the auction block this coming Friday.*



## A Word from Our President

Hi Everyone,

The club has quite a few fun things planned for the upcoming months, and I hope you will be able to join us!

This month is the annual auction and there will be everything from rough material to finished pieces set in silver or wrapped in copper. We will also have items just for the kids to bid on too. If you have items to donate you can drop them off at the workshop or bring them to the meeting. Because of the auction, our business portion will be very short.

The June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting will be a rock swap and picnic at Veterans Park in Alabaster. Bring anything to swap, sell, or show off.

Rick has field trips planned all through the spring and summer. The Sylacauga Marble Festival is April 7<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup>, and I know Rick has a tour planned for Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup>. In May, there is a fossil collecting trip and it is being led by the Alabama Museum of Natural History.

Everything is coming together for the Gem Show. Currently, I have received 25 vendor contracts, and I have one paid vendor on the waitlist and three others that are interested. At this count, I consider the show as booked. Would club members be interested in T-shirts printed for the show featuring the date/place, and event logo? It's just an idea I had, so please let me know your thoughts. Also, I can't find anything that tells me how many years the club has been doing shows. Does anyone know? I found information that makes me think this year is the 54<sup>th</sup> year? Are there any graphic designers in the club that could help with flyers and such, and maybe update the logo?

Also, the club has been asked to participate in the Birmingham Folk Festival on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 11 am -7pm at Avondale Park. This would be a great opportunity for the club to introduce ourselves to more people in a family-friendly environment. This is a free event for the public.

Well, that's quite a lot going on. I hope to see everyone soon!

Be safe. Till I see you again,

Rhea Proffitt

AMLS President & Gem Show Coord.

[thelapidaryclub@gmail.com](mailto:thelapidaryclub@gmail.com)

[amlsgemshow@gmail.com](mailto:amlsgemshow@gmail.com)





# Other Announcements

## HELP WANTED

The following committees have openings and need your support.

**Website:** The Web Site Committee shall keep the club's website current and functioning properly.

**Hospitality Committee:** Assists in setting up the front table and food table at meetings, greets members and visitors, and makes sure everyone signs in. The Hospitality committee shall aid in implementing the monthly programs or other society entertainment by coordinating volunteers for refreshments.

**Nominating Committee:** The Nominating Committee shall present to the membership a slate of Officers in October.

**Finance:** The Finance Committee shall preside over the budget and collect dues from others on the committee.

**Recording Secretary:** Records minutes of meetings (MoM) and provides a transcript to the newsletter for publication each month.

**Program Committee:** Levan and Anthony could use some assistance.

**Field Trip Committee:** Rick is currently a committee of one and could use some assistance.

**Newsletter:** The Rockhound Roundup only “prints” what is sent in. Tyler is the Editor and could use a few good reporters.



# Club Events

**4/10/2026:** Annual AMLS auction. Donations for the auction can be brought to the meeting or workshop.

**5/16/2026:** Birmingham Folk Festival. The club has been asked to participate in public demonstrations (club-related skills, craft, or trade). Avondale Park; 4101 5th Ave S, Birmingham, AL, 11am-7pm

- Space will be provided for tent/canopy setup.
- Demonstrating is free; demonstrating and vending incurs a \$100 vendor fee.
- Generator power will be available.
- Please sync with Rhea if you are interested in participating.

**5/31/2026:** Cabbing Party, AMLS Workshop, 8036 Parkway Drive SE, Leeds, AL, 12pm-4pm

**6/13/2026:** Picnic Rock Swap at Veterans Park, Alabaster, AL. Additional details to follow.

**8/30/2026:** Cabbing Party, AMLS Workshop, 8036 Parkway Drive SE, Leeds, AL, 12pm-4pm

# Workshop Hours

The AMLS Workshop is located at 8036 Parkway Drive SE, Leeds, AL

**Tuesdays / Saturdays (12pm-4pm)**

**Thursdays (4pm-8pm)**

# Shows & Swaps

**April 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> • Memphis, TN • Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society;** 7777 Walnut Grove Rd, Memphis, TN 38120; Sat. 9-6, Sun.10-5; Adults \$6, Children 12 & under free. Free parking. <https://earthwideopen.wixsite.com/rocks>

**June 26<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> • Classic City Gem & Mineral Show •** The Classic Center, 300 N Thomas St, Athens, GA 30601.

**September 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> • Alabama Mineral & Lapidary Society Gem & Mineral Show •** Bessemer Civic Center, 1130 9th Ave SW, Bessemer, AL 35022.

**October 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> • Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society Show •** Huntsville Jaycee Community Center, 2180 Airport Road SW, Huntsville, AL 35802.

**November 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>th</sup> • Cobb County Gem & Mineral Society Show •** Cobb County Civic Center, 548 South Marietta Pkwy., Marietta GA 30060.

**November 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> • Mobile Rock & Gem Society Annual Show •** Abba Shrine Center, 7701 Hitt Road, Mobile, AL 36695.

**December (TBD) • Montgomery Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show •** Garrett Coliseum, 1555 Federal Drive, Montgomery, AL 36107.



## *April Birthstone –Diamond*

The earliest documented use of diamonds dates to around 2500BCE in China. Their earliest uses weren't jewelry, however. Diamonds were initially used for polishing axe heads and for other more industrial applications that required a very hard stone, which was used in its natural form.

Jewelry use came a little later, it seems. We know that the earliest diamond trading documented was around 400BCE in India, and until around 1300 to 1400CE India was the major supplier and trading hub for these stones. In the 1400's we first see the emergence of cut stones, although rough, as those first cuts were. The diamond was adopted by royalty, used for ceremonial and religious purposes, and were also used as talismans. The way the stones refracted light was very attractive, as rough cut though they were.

The 1500's were when we saw diamonds becoming popular in Europe. An interesting footnote is that it became somewhat popular with the less decorous crowd to have a stone mounted point up and to commit an early form of graffiti by scratching initials or other things in whatever glass, ceramic, stone, or metal object they chose. This was, of course, not appreciated. This was more common in 1600's and 1700's I think. Shop owners complained bitterly about expensive windows, counters, and mirrors being vandalized.

In 1477, Archduke Maximilian of Austria is credited with the first proposal with a diamond engagement ring. It became popular as a symbol of romance, enduring love, and commitment from that point onwards. 1912 saw Jewelers of America creating a standardized birthstone list with diamond as the April stone. 1919 saw the creation of the modern brilliant cut which greatly increased the light return, and therefore the sparkle of the cut stones.

Later in the 1900's you saw other clear stones being added to April's list as affordable substitutes. This would include natural spinel, sapphire, and synthetics like cubic zirconia (CZ). Now, we see factory-made synthetic diamonds called lab-grown diamonds added to the menu of clear stones.

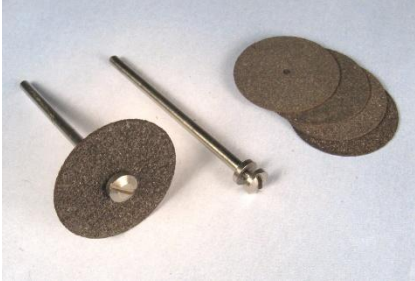
If you decide you would like to dig your own diamonds, check out Crater of Diamonds State Park in Murfreesboro, Arkansas. India is just too far to drive!

Yvonne Foster



## *Bench Tips*

### **Cutoff Wheels**



Cutoff wheels (also called separating discs) are inexpensive and do a great job of cutting or shaping steel. You can use them to sharpen tool points, cut piano wire to length, make slots, and sharpen worn drills. Other uses include modifying pliers and making your own design stamps.

My preference is the one-inch diameter size. Be sure to hold the wheel firmly so nothing moves to break the disc and wear your safety glasses. Those are little flakes of steel coming off the disk.

By the way, cutoff wheels are not as good at cutting soft metals like copper, silver, and gold. They will work, but soft metals tend to clog up the cutting edges.

### **Deburring Jump Rings**

When cutting jump rings from large gauge wire for chain making, you'll notice the saw leaves a small burr. An easy way to remove these is to tumble the rings with some fine-cut pyramids. It's best not to tumble for a long period because it tends to remove the polished finish from the wire.

No tumbler? No problem. You don't actually need a tumbler. I just put a handful of pyramids in a wide mouth plastic jar and shake for a bit. You can find these pyramids in the tumble finishing section of most jewelry supply catalogs.

Happy hammering,

Brad Smith

[BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com](mailto:BradSmithJewelry@gmail.com)

See More of my Smart Solutions for Jewelry Making at <http://amazon.com/dp/B0BQ8YVLTJ>



# AMLS Field Trip Committee Report **April 2026**

## PAST

Saturday March 21<sup>st</sup> – Summerville, GA Extravaganza

I've been to several digs in Summerville, GA, but I have never seen the quality of specimens found by our Club members on this private two dig combo trip! 21 participants took home impressive and colorful lace agate, druzy quartz, geodes, stalactites, and stalagmites. We even got to collect at the famous Patty Pit on a Saturday. That's a first for us or anyone else, as far as I know. Weather was ideal and we had a feast prepared by Pamela Patty for our lunch in between the 2 digs.



*Top: AMLS digs a private pit of Pamela Patty. Summerville, GA*

*Left: A myriad of fantastic material collected on this field trip.*



**PRESENT**

**This Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> - The Sylacauga Marble Festival (Sylacauga, AL)**



More info at [Magicofmarblefestival.com](http://Magicofmarblefestival.com)

Our club members will be given a private bus tour of the original marble quarry, renowned as the source of the purest white crystalline marble in the world (aka Alabama Marble). Many of the buildings and sculptures in Washington DC and in buildings all over the country utilize Alabama Marble. Sculptors prize Alabama marble for its fine texture in addition to its purity. As part of the festival, several sculptors will be demonstrating their skills carving statues and displaying other artwork in the Sylacauga library. Lots of additional activities will be going on all day, including a scavenger hunt, lectures, discussions on the operational components and equipment used in Marble harvesting, etc..

**We'll meet at 9:45 at the B.B. Comer Library for our 10:00 bus tour, which is limited to the first 30 who sign up. 27 spots are already taken, which leaves 3 spots available on a first come, first served basis. Email me ASAP if you are interested.** There will be a wait list for others over the 30. Even if you don't make the bus tour, there is lots to do at the festival. The festival is located on North Norton Avenue at Central Park across from the Blue Bell Creameries. There is no admission charge, that I know of.

**BONUS!** AMLS member Randy Sandrik (who was GM of the quarries for 5 years) has offered to lead our club members on a trip to the high wall and overlook. I'll have more details on the timing of this (likely immediately after the bus tour) to share with all of our attendees early this week and certainly in time for our Club Meeting and auction this Friday, 4/10/26.



**FUTURE**

**SAVE THESE DATES:**

Updated info on 2026 field trips

**May**

**Saturday May 30<sup>th</sup>** - Cretaceous Marine Fossils with the AL Museum of Natural History (around Tuscaloosa, AL)



We'll be collecting multiple varieties of shark teeth, mosasaur teeth/vertebrae, fish fossils, echinoids (urchins), ray teeth, crocodilian teeth and scutes, mollusks, dinosaur teeth, and other **Cretaceous Marine fossils**. Participants must be 6 years old or older; all minors must be accompanied by a guardian, submit a waiver in advance and bring your own food, water, extra clothing, etc.. Cost is \$40 pp **and limited to the first 30 club members who register and pay**. A waiting list will be saved for those over the first 30. To secure a private excursion for our club, we must take all 30 spots on the bus.

Note: This trip was arranged by a lottery system with the AMNH.

**UPDATE** – 26 club members have already signed up for this trip. I went ahead and committed and paid for all 30 of these spots to beat the deadline (4/1) so we will have a private trip. I fully expect that we will fill the other 4 spots this week. If you haven't already signed up to participate and want to, please contact me **ASAP**.

**June & July**

**TBA**



August

**Saturday August 15<sup>th</sup>** - The Cook Science Museum and Mining Company (Decatur, AL)



This will be an afternoon field trip, as they open at Noon in the Summer. The AMLS Group rate is \$13 for children ages 3-14, and \$17 for adults.

The Cook Science Museum is very impressive and a relatively new museum with plenty of geology, mineral, gem, cave, and fossil exhibits, plus an outdoor Mining Company. More details later.

September

**September 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, & 6<sup>th</sup>** – AMSL Annual Gem and Mineral Show (Bessemer, AL)

Thank you,  
Rick Halbrooks  
Chairperson, Field Trip Committee  
E: AMLS [fieldtrips@gmail.com](mailto:fieldtrips@gmail.com) | P: 205-410-0233

## Schedule of Events

### March 17 -April 2

Marble Scavenger Hunt

### April 1

Sculptors Arrive—Registration at B. B. Comer Library

### April 1-12

Sculptors will sculpt daily at Central Park  
(Central Park across from Blue Bell Creameries)\*

### April 2-11

Group Library Tours for adults and children available upon request. Check for dates and times with library staff at (256)249-0961

### April 2-12

Marble Sculptures for Sale & Marble Product Displays  
Monday-Friday 9:00a.m. to 4:30p.m.  
Saturday 9:00a.m. to 2:30p.m.  
Sunday 12:00p.m. to 4:00p.m.

### April 2

"Conversations from Gantt's Quarry"  
with Martha Waldrip, Shirley Williams & Glenda Gaines  
Harry I. Brown Auditorium, B. B. Comer Library  
10:00a.m.

### April 3

Sculptor Symposium with a Master Italian Sculptor  
(Closed to the public)  
Harry I. Brown Auditorium, B. B. Comer Library  
10:00a.m.

### April 5

"Conversations from Gantt's Quarry"  
with Martha Waldrip, Shirley Williams & Glenda Gaines  
Harry I. Brown Auditorium, B. B. Comer Library  
10:00a.m.

### April 7

"Conversations from Gantt's Quarry"  
with Martha Waldrip, Shirley Williams & Glenda Gaines  
Harry I. Brown Auditorium, B. B. Comer Library  
10:00a.m.

### April 8

American Sculptor Lecture - Pamela Paine  
(Open to the public with limited seating)  
Harry I. Brown Auditorium, B. B. Comer Library  
10:00a.m.

### April 10

"Conversations from Gantt's Quarry"  
with Martha Waldrip, Shirley Williams & Glenda Gaines  
Harry I. Brown Auditorium, B. B. Comer Library  
10:00a.m.

### April 12

Scavenger Hunt Awards Ceremony with Miss Sylacauga  
Harry I. Brown Auditorium, B. B. Comer Library  
10:00a.m.

### April 12

FESTIVAL ENDS  
12:00 Noon

\*Schedule May Change Due to Inclement Weather and Availability of Sculptors

## Marble Festival Sponsors

Alabama Municipal Electric Authority  
Alabama Power Foundation, Inc.  
Alabama State Council on the Arts  
Alabama Tourism Department  
AM3 Stone  
Architectural Stone Imports  
B. B. Comer Memorial Library  
Blue Bell Creameries  
Blue Horizon Travel  
City of Pietrasanta, Italy  
City of Sylacauga  
Conn Equipment  
Coosa Valley Medical Center  
Curtis and Son Funeral Home  
Drs. Jonathan and Tara Douglas, Broadway Spinal Care  
First Bank of Alabama  
Heritage South Credit Union  
Imerys  
Isabel Anderson Comer Museum and Arts Center  
JLT Events, Jaclynn Long Traffanstedt  
Miller Lumber Company  
Morris Custom Marble & Granite  
Nemak  
Omya, Inc.  
Pizza & Pint  
Shoot First Video  
SWEN  
Sylacauga Arts Council  
Sylacauga Chamber of Commerce  
Sylacauga Parks & Recreation  
Towne Inn

## Contact Information

Ted Spears—Marble Festival Chairman  
email: tedspears4316@gmail.com  
B. B. Comer Memorial Library  
(256) 249-0961  
www.magicofmarblefestival.com

The mission of the Sylacauga Marble Festival is to recreate the magic of marble through its artistic, commercial and industrial applications.

April 1 - April 12, 2025

# Sylacauga Magic of Marble Festival

Sponsored by  
Alabama State Council on the Arts  
& Sylacauga Arts Council



**IMERYS Quarry Tours**

**April 1st, 2nd & 3rd**

A drive through tour of the original quarry. Transportation furnished, registration is required.

Please register at B. B. Comer Memorial Library, (256)249-0961

(Seating is limited. Must be 16+)

9:30a.m. to 10:30a.m.



**OMYA Quarry Tours**

**April 8th, 9th & 10th**

A lecture and viewing of the operational components of the quarry.

Transportation is furnished, registration is required.

Please register at B. B. Comer Memorial Library, (256)249-0961

(Seating is limited. Must be 16+)

9:30a.m. to 10:30a.m.

**Scavenger Hunt**

Get ready for the Marble Festival by participating in the Marble Scavenger Hunt!

Applications may be picked up at B. B. Comer Memorial Library, The Sylacauga Chamber of Commerce, or Comer Museum and Art Center. The Hunt begins Monday, March 17th and ends Wednesday, April 2nd at 5:00p.m.

Completed contest forms may be turned in at any of the pickup locations listed.



The Marble Festival is located in Sylacauga, AL on North Norton Avenue at Central Park across from Blue Bell Creameries.



For more information about lodging, dining, and shopping in Sylacauga please visit the Sylacauga Chamber of Commerce website at [www.sylacaugachamber.com](http://www.sylacaugachamber.com).

Visit us on FaceBook  
[facebook.com/marblefestival](https://facebook.com/marblefestival)  
or  
[magicofmarblefestival.com](https://magicofmarblefestival.com)

Sculptor Frank Murphy will instruct and supervise at the sculpting site during the 2025 Festival.

*Hello Member!*

*2026 is the year our club is going to become full functioning again and I am excited.*

*Each of us has something we can contribute, I would like for each member to think about where they see themselves fitting in for 2026. I am especially hopeful that everyone that can, will take an active role in our club. Let's talk.*

*Every member is being asked to fill out a renewal application in its entirety. We are beginning 2026 with a new membership chairman and a new list and we need your completed application to include you as a member on this list. Even if you think nothing has changed, we need a new renewal application for our file.*

*Sincerely,*

*AMLS Leadership*

Club meetings are the second Friday each month (except September) doors open at 6 and the meeting starts at 6:30 with a pot-luck supper

Meeting place is the Cahaba Heights Methodist Church in Cahaba Heights

The website is at [www.lapidaryclub.com](http://www.lapidaryclub.com) visit every once and awhile. Share your pictures and any other information by emailing [webmaster@lapidaryclub.com](mailto:webmaster@lapidaryclub.com)

Visit the Members Only pages for club resources and field trip information.

The Rockhound Roundup newsletter is emailed each Monday before the Friday Meeting please read your newsletter to get the latest information that is being shared by members.

Your club needs members to join one or more of the club committees. When you join a committee you learn what's going on and how to best take advantage of club resources.

“the club works for its members when the members work in the club”

**Alabama Mineral & Lapidary Society**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Renewal Application**

Renewal  Reinstatement

rev.02.10.25

Family \$25 (add adult family \$10)  Single \$20  Student \$15

Family members must live in the same household - children 18 years or under living at home

*( Please write legibly so we can record your information correctly )*

Adult Head of Household \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Day/Mo \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Club Interest \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse or Other Adult \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Day/Mo \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone (     ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Club Interest \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Children 18 years or under living at home (or additional adult family member living at home)

	Age	Birth Day	Mo	Day	Year
_____					
_____					
_____					
_____					

Email: [membership@lapidaryclub.com](mailto:membership@lapidaryclub.com) for questions regarding this application

**mail this completed form along with your check payable to: AMLS**

**AMLS Membership - 8036 Parkway Drive - Leeds, Alabama 35094**

**your ID Badges will be mailed to your home address**

*( for office use only below )*

Received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Paid \_\_\_\_\_ I.D. Card \_\_\_\_\_

Payment Type: \_\_\_\_\_ Confirmation No: \_\_\_\_\_ Welcome Email: \_\_\_ Receipt No: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Lapidary Club Field Trip Survey

# 2026/2027 seasons

## 1. How many organized rock/mineral/fossil field trips and/or digs have you participated in?

	Total (incl. w/Club)	With AMLS
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1-5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6-10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
>10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 2. Field Trips that I'm interested in doing with the Club:

- Rock/Mineral/Gem Digs
- Fossil Digs
- Natural History Museum visits
- Cave trips
- Other suggestions \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 3. I'm up for field trips in the following proximity to Birmingham:

- Local/day trips (< 2 ½ hour drive, each way)
- Overnight trips/adjacent states
- Multi-night trips (w/Camping or Hotel stays)

## 4. Please list any digs that you would like to see on the Club's 2026/27 field trip list (location?):

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Please star the digs/field trips in question # 4 that you have personally done in the past.

6. Are there digs that you've done that you wouldn't recommend...and why?

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7. My comfortable activity level: (please check all that apply)

- Easy Going** – drive up to site; short/level walks; sifting & site collection
- Moderate** – short hikes; stream work; light digging; some uphill and down hill
- Demanding** – longer hikes; steep grades; digging; hammer & chisel work; climbing

**OPTIONAL:**

Age (please circle one)      < 16      17-25      26-50      51-64      65+

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# years as an AMLS member (please circle one)      < 1      2-3      4-9      > 10

Are there any other suggestions or comments that you would like to share?

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**Thank you for participating in this survey!**

If you complete this at the Club meeting, please give your completed survey to Rick Halbrooks, Chair of the Field Trip Committee. If you are completing this survey on-line or printing a hard copy to complete at home, please image your completed survey with your cell phone and email it to [AMLSfieldtrips@gmail.com](mailto:AMLSfieldtrips@gmail.com). The sooner I receive these, the quicker I can take your responses into consideration for our 2026/2027 field trips. I'd like to have all these surveys completed and returned no later than our next 12/31/2025.

- RH/AMLS



# Alabama Mineral & Lapidary Society

## Monthly Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2026

### Opening

**Blessing:** John Gaston

**Total Attendance:** 17 members

### Speakers

**Ashley Allen** – Environmental Science Teacher, Oneonta High School

**Rick Allen** – Did not present due to time constraints.

### Reminders

Rhea has announced a Board Meeting open to all members: **Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 6:30 PM** at the workshop.

### Announcements

- Gem show in Georgia – upcoming weekend.
- Huntsville Gem Show – end of March.
- **March 21 – Shop will be closed.** (Members will be in Summerville.)
- **Cabbing Party – March 29.**
- Meeting minutes from the previous month were approved.
- Lanyards are available for members to use with their membership cards, particularly useful during digs with other clubs.
- Advertising for the September Gem Show will begin in May.

### Upcoming Events

- **March 21 – Field Trip** (Location not recorded.)
- **April 11 – Sylacauga Trip.**
- **June 13, 2026 – Club Picnic at Veterans Park**, 11:00 AM until close. Members are asked to bring food and condiments for hamburgers and hot dogs.

# New Business

## Equipment Request

Levan has requested funds for a pump for the chop saw, estimated at **\$150.00 plus shipping**. Oil will also be required.

## September Gem Show – Non-Member Vendor Request

Anthony requested that Johnny Cates receive the monthly newsletter and a vendor spot in the September Gem Show. As Mr. Cates is not currently a member, Rhea will contact him regarding membership, which is required to receive the newsletter. Regarding the show, there is already a waiting list with pre-paid vendors; membership will be required before any further consideration.

## Shop Work Session

Rhea needs assistance at the shop. The originally proposed time of noon was moved to **2:00 PM**.

## AI-Assisted Notetaking

Anthony suggested using AI for notetaking at meetings. Rhea noted a concern that several members share the same name, which could make it difficult to accurately attribute statements. This will be taken under advisement.

## Open Positions & Volunteer Needs

The following positions are currently open and in need of volunteers:

- Nominating Committee
- Treasurer
- Recording Secretary
- Webpage Editor
- Bylaws Review Volunteer
- Weed eating around the shop – Caleb (new member) has volunteered to assist.

## Membership

Membership forms are available at tonight's meeting and online.

## Facility & Construction Update

- The City of Leeds has torn up the sidewalk around the Pants Store. The garbage can in front of the shop and the benches are currently missing.
- Rhea will submit another request to the shop owner regarding the awning, which poses a safety concern for club members.

## Featured Presentation: Amber

Ashley Allen delivered an outstanding presentation on amber. Mr. Allen's partner, John Cotton — owner of Quality Pest Control — generously donates amber specimens to support educational demonstrations on polishing the material.

**Member Activity:** Members selected a piece of amber, attempted to identify inclusions within it, and practiced polishing techniques using varied sandpaper grits.



# Alabama Mineral & Lapidary Society

## Board Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2026

### Attendance

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**Total Attendees:** 9 members

### Budget Discussion

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- The club budget was reviewed and discussed.
- A suggestion was made to budget for non-member speaker compensation, including hotel accommodation if necessary.
- Miscellaneous shop upkeep costs and weed eating expenses are to be added to the budget.
- The annual church donation is due and should be accounted for in the current budget cycle.

### Virtual Speaker Setup – Zoom

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Anthony proposed setting up Zoom as an option for remote speakers. Levan suggested conducting a test run prior to any live use. Levan will contact the church and coordinate with Anthony to schedule a test date.

### Gem Show – Budget & Expenses

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#### T-Shirts

- Discussion was held regarding event t-shirts featuring show information.
- Yvonne suggested sending a mock-up t-shirt design to vendors to gauge interest in purchasing.
- A future option to include t-shirt purchase with vendor registration was proposed.
- Rhea received a quote: **\$15.00 per shirt** when ordering 20 or more.

#### Hotel Expenses

Rhea – **4 nights at \$400.00 total.**

#### Entry Fees

- **General admission: \$5.00 per person.**
- Weekend pass: \$10.00 (proposed – pending approval).
- Veteran discount: Under consideration.
- Senior discount: Under consideration.

**The show budget was approved.**

### Club Income Sources

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The following were identified as the club's primary annual income sources:

- Membership dues
- Auction proceeds
- Donations
- Gem Show revenue

## **Nominating Committee**

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The nominating committee was discussed and the following members agreed to serve:

- Levan
- John Gaston
- Reggie
- Anthony

## **Shop Awning Status**

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The shop lease has been located. Rhea will contact the building owner to discuss a resolution regarding the awning.