

ROCKHOUND ROUNDUP



MARCH 2026

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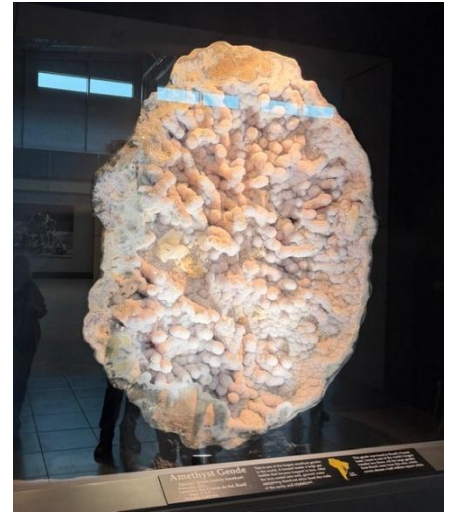
Spotlight



AMLS members view hundreds of newly acquired specimens as they tour two stories of private archives within the Tellus Science Museum. The club was guided by Museum Curator Ryan Roney.



A small portion of the extensive rock, mineral, gem, and fossil collection at the Tellus Museum



Amethyst and Calcite Geode, Tellus Museum



T-rex "Stan", Triceratops, Deinosuchus (giant crocodilian), and Allosaurus dominate the prehistoric skeletal collection of the Tellus Science Museum.



A Word from Our President

Happy St Patrick's everyone,

The next meeting is March 13th at 6:30 and the kids group meeting is at 5:30. Remember to wear green, and let's keep the shenanigans to a minimum.

We will have the auction next month, April 10th. Donations for the auction can be brought to the meeting or workshop. If you have slabs, rough material, books, lapidary/jewelry making supplies or equipment, all can be auctioned. We appreciate your generosity—every donation helps make our auction a success! Thank you for supporting our club.

Levan has been working hard at planning a picnic/rock swap for June's meeting, which will be held on June 13th at Veterans Park in Alabaster. Details coming soon! If you're interested in helping organize the picnic/rock swap, assisting with setup or cleanup, coordinating activities, or would like to suggest speakers for upcoming meetings and programs throughout the year, please reach out to Levan at levanfoster@gmail.com or talk to him at the next meeting. I know he'd love some help, and your involvement makes a big difference in building our club's community spirit.

I know we haven't had a tumbled rocks contest lately—would any of you be interested in doing that again this year? There are about 2 ½ large buckets of rocks from Brookwood, I believe. The club gives out small, tumbled rocks at the Gem Show and at Halloween for the kids, and with members' help, we won't have to buy any. If you're interested, please reply to this email or let me know at the next meeting. Your help would be greatly appreciated!

I'd also like to thank Ryan Roney, the curator at the Tellus Science Museum. Our group was small, which allowed us to see how donated collections are sorted and classified. We saw how minerals and fossils were carefully labeled and cataloged, giving us an inside look at the museum's behind-the-scenes work.

I'd like to thank everyone who "works behind the scenes" to keep our club going and as always volunteers are always needed.

See you at the next meeting,

Rhea Proffitt

AMLS President & Gem Show Coord.

thelapidaryclub@gmail.com

amlsgemshow@gmail.com



Monthly Program



LUCKY YOU!

In honor of Friday the 13th, this month’s program will be:
“FUN WITH FIELD TRIPS”

In addition to the usual fellowship, food, updates, club business, give-a-ways, and shenanigans, you’ll learn how to improve your LUCK at finding treasures from the Earth!

Whether you’ve never been on a field trip, or you’re a veteran of dozens, we will answer all your questions regarding rock, mineral, and fossil digs, including the
“BIG questions”:

- WHY?**
- WHAT?** ...do I wear? ...do I do? ...am I looking for? ...tools do I need to bring? ...are some of the tricks of the trade? ...are some of the common rookie mistakes to avoid?
- HOW?** ...do I find stuff? ...can I maximize my success? ...do I know the difference between trash and treasure?
- WHO?** ...is bringing the popcorn?
- WHEN?** ...will this program promo be over so I can go back to watching funny cat videos?

GOOD LUCK!



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

3/13/2026: AMLS Meeting, "FUN WITH FIELD TRIPS", Cahaba Heights United Methodist, 3139 Cahaba Heights Rd, Birmingham, AL, 6:30pm until the fun stops.

3/29/2026: Cabbing Party, AMLS Workshop, 8036 Parkway Drive SE, Leeds, AL, 12pm-4pm

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

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

3/14-15/2026 GASTONIA, NC: Gaston Gem & Mineral Club; Gastonia Farmer’s Market, 410 E. Long Ave, Gastonia, NC 28054; Sat. 10 6, Sun. 10 4; Free Admission. Website: gastongemclub.weebly.com/ Facebook: Friends of Gaston Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show

3/20-22/2026 MARIETTA, GA: Bellpoint Gem Show; Cobb Civic Center, 548 S Marietta Pkwy SE, Marietta, GA 30060; Fri 10 6, Sat. 10 6, Sun. 10 5; Pre-purchase admission: \$12 (all 3 days), \$15 at the door (cash only; no ATM’s available), Kids under 3 with adult are free. Website: [https://bggamc.homestead.com/Lexington Rock Gem and Jewelry Show.html](https://bggamc.homestead.com/Lexington_Rock_Gem_and_Jewelry_Show.html)

3/27-29/2026 LEXINGTON, KY: Bluegrass Gem and Mineral Club of Lexington, KY; Clarion Hotel and Conference Center, 1950 Newtown Pike, Lexington, KY 40511; Fri 4 8, Sat. 9 6, Sun. 10 5; Admission: \$10 (all 3 days), Kids under 12 and scouts in uniform with adult are free. Free parking in rear, handicap accessible. Website: [https://bggamc.homestead.com/Lexington Rock Gem and Jewelry Show.html](https://bggamc.homestead.com/Lexington_Rock_Gem_and_Jewelry_Show.html)

4/18-19/2026 MEMPHIS, TN: Memphis Archaeological and Geological Society; 7777 Walnut Grove Rd • Memphis, TN 38120; Sat. 9 6, Sun.10 5; Admission: Adults \$6, Children 12 & under free. Free parking. Links: <https://earthwideopen.wixsite.com/rocks>

9/4-6/2026 BESSEMER, AL: Alabama Mineral and Lapidary Society; 1130 9th Avenue SW, Bessemer, AL 35-22; more details to follow.



AMLS Field Trip Committee Report **March 2026**

PAST

Thanks to inclement weather in January, our club had two field trips in February:

First, a DMC Field Trip hosted by our club had 35 participants from GA, TN, and FL joining several of our members at the Cedar Creek Reservoir in NW Alabama on a surprisingly warm and beautiful day. Lots of Mississippian Marine Fossils including crinoids, many varieties of bryozoans and corals, nautiloids, brachiopods, ammonites, blastoids, trace fossils, and others were collected.



Nautiloids, Cedar Creek

Mixed fossils, Cedar Creek

Small crinoid head, Cedar Creek

The second was a return trip to the Tellus Science Museum in Cartersville, GA. The Weiman Mineral collection there is incredible and a must for Rockhounds to see in person. The museum’s curator, Ryan Roney, gave our group a two hour tour through the exhibits and also through the “Staff Only” doors to tour the museum’s archives!



Megalodon jaw, Tellus Museum

Mosasaur, Xiphactinus, and Archelon turtle

Deinonychus and Appalachiosaurus, Tellus Museum



PRESENT

Coming up Saturday March 21st is a special treat and one of the most productive field trips you're likely going to have this year: Two private dig locations in Summerville, GA along with a "Bucket Buffet" lunch. Pamela Patty (she's the rockhound of the Patty family) will take us to her favorite secret lace agate spot, then to another secret spot with two large quartz veins. She also cooks up a delicious lunch and serves it in the (clean and empty) bucket of a front-end loader. Our club will get a chance to visit her new rock shop and if you'd like, you can stay over in town and collect at the original "Patty Pit" quarry on Sunday. If you haven't already signed up on one of the sheets at a club meeting or the workshop, just drop me an email or text message that you'll be participating and how many will be in your party. The charge is \$25 per person for everything. \$15 for Kids, aged 4-14. We'll meet in the parking lot of Jim's Family Restaurant @ 10 am EST. Don't be late!

You could also stop by the Bellpoint Gem Show near I-75 on your way to or from this event! See the "Shows & Swaps" Section for more details.



FUTURE

SAVE THESE DATES:

Updated info on 2026 field trips

April

Saturday April 11th - The Sylacauga Marble Festival (Sylacauga, AL)

Magicofmarblefestival.com





FIELD TRIPS



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 (also known as Alabama Marble). Many of the buildings and sculptures in Washington DC and in buildings all over the country utilize Alabama Marble.

Sculptors prize AL 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 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 for our 10:00 bus tour, which is limited to the first 30 who sign up. We have just 5 spots left on the bus, then we will start a waiting list in case anyone drops out. Stay tuned for more details as they are available. No admission charge, that I know of.

May

Saturday May 30th - Stream Sifting Excursion on Private Property (near Tuscaloosa)



Collecting Cretaceous Marine Fossils with the Alabama Museum of Natural History: Finds will likely be multiple varieties of shark teeth, mosasaur teeth, vertebrae and other bones, crocodilian teeth & scutes, fish fossils, echinoids (urchins), mollusks, dinosaur teeth, etc. Must be at least 6 years old; Cost is \$40 per person and limited to the first 30 members who sign up and pay. We will have a private excursion as long as we take up all 30 spots on the bus. More details to follow.

June & July

TBA



August

Saturday August 15th - The Cook Science Museum and Mining Company (Decatur, AL)



This is Alabama’s newest and most modern museum. Well done, with impressive displays, nicely organized and comprehensive across all of the sciences. Geology, rocks, minerals, gems, fossils, and an outdoor Mining Company area comprise the largest percentage of floor space in the museum.

SPECIAL REQUEST FOR ALL AMLS MEMBERS:

If you haven’t yet provided your input for 2026 and 2027 field trips, please fill out the Field Trip Survey form in this newsletter, take a photo of both sides and email the completed form to me at AMLSfieldtrips@gmail.com at your earliest opportunity. We had 55 fill out a survey in 2024; I hope for even more input from those 55 members and many more this year. I have 15 so far for this year’s survey.

Thank you,
Rick Halbrooks
Chairperson, Field Trip Committee

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.

Visit us on FaceBook
facebook.com/marblefestival
or
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 visit every once and awhile. Share your pictures and any other information by emailing 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 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?

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?

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. 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



Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2026

Rhea Profitt, president, called the meeting to order. Please send info or pictures to Tyler on the Friday before the monthly meeting to be included in the monthly newsletter.

We have one visitor, Caleb, who has also joined this evening as a member.

There were no minutes from December to approve because we did not have a formal meeting. The January meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather.

The treasurer is not present so there is not a treasurer’s report to review or approve.

Old Business: We need 2-3 people to help Rhea and Levan with the budget.

We need a nominating committee to find people for board positions. Reggie is willing to help but we need a couple of more people. We have not had a full slate of officers and committee chairs for a couple of years. A copy of the bylaws are located on the website. We may look at the organizational structure of the club with the goal of simplifying.

Levan is working on a Rock Swap / Picnic for the June meeting at Oak Mountain State Park. There is a pavilion close to the river, near a restroom and parking lot for \$135.00. The entrance fee to the park is \$5.00. The group voted to host the June meeting on Saturday June 13th or Sunday June 14th depending on availability of the pavilion.

There was a discussion about the awning on the front of the workshop. Someone apparently left the bar nearby and hit the electrical pole in front of the building causing it to fall on the awning. Rhea has asked for volunteers to help repair the awning brackets or help take it down and put it behind the building. Building owners are claiming they are not responsible but need a copy of the lease to confirm.

Randy, new member and retired mining engineer, did a fantastic presentation on his favorite rock locations in Utah, Michigan and Colorado. He also had rocks to share with club members from those various locations.

Rick discussed the various, upcoming field trips that are planned. The January field trip to north Alabama has been rescheduled again for Saturday, February 21st. The next field trip is to Tellus Museum in Georgia on February 28th. There is a dig in Summerville, GA in March, a trip to Sylacauga on April 11th, and a Fossil Creek field trip on May 30th. He needs volunteers to be a part of the field trip committee.

Names were drawn to select rocks that Randy brought and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Casey Faulkner