

ROCKHOUND ROUNDUP



MAY 2026

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Spotlight



Sculptors transform Sylacauga marble into works of art. – Sylacauga Marble Festival



A Word from Our President

Hello Everyone,

With this wonderful warm weather many of us are making plans for vacations and home projects and AMLS has been planning too.

Here are a few activities we're lining up:

- A creek fossil search
- A picnic with rocks to share and swap
- A museum visit and more

To make these events happen (and do even more), we'll need volunteers. Please consider lending a hand.

Nominating Committee — Help Needed

Levan and Reggie are looking for members to serve on the nominating committee. If you can help, please reach out to them.

Birmingham Folk Festival — Volunteers Needed (May 16, 10:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.)

I'd like to register AMLS to attend as a nonprofit exhibitor at the Birmingham Folk Festival. It's a free, family-friendly public event and a great opportunity to introduce Birmingham to AMLS.

- Need: 4–5 volunteers to help staff the AMLS table and greet visitors.
- Would love: Jr. Rockhounds representation.

This is your club and we can build it how we want, it just takes everyone.

Hope to see you at our next meeting on May 8th.

Be safe and see you soon,

Rhea Proffitt

AMLS President & Gem Show Coord.

thelapidaryclub@gmail.com

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

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

June 26th-28th • [Classic City Gem & Mineral Show](#) • The Classic Center, 300 N Thomas St, Athens, GA 30601.

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

October 9th-11th • [Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society Show](#) • Huntsville Jaycee Community Center, 2180 Airport Road SW, Huntsville, AL 35802.

November 20th-22th • [Cobb County Gem & Mineral Society Show](#) • Cobb County Civic Center, 548 South Marietta Pkwy., Marietta GA 30060.

November 27th-29th • [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.



May Birthstone – Emerald

Emerald is the primary May birthstone, representing rebirth, fertility, and love. It is a green beryl, notably the deeper green hues and is found in several locations including the nearby Appalachian Mountains and farther afield areas of Central and South America, Africa, Asia, Europe, Indies, Australia, and the middle east.

In the US, the primary locations you can find emeralds are North Carolina and Nevada. These produce good stones though not the very best.

Columbia, Zambia, Brazil, and Russia are all famous sources for top quality stones. Zambian stones often have a blue/green tint, and some mines are noted for high quality. Brazil is noted for good to high quality but is more widely known for a consistent high-volume production. Russia has a long history of emerald mining, though production volume is not very high. In Africa, Ethiopia has mines that produce stones with excellent clarity. Zimbabwe, Madagascar and Somalia are also major supply centers while India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan are the dominant producers in Asia.

Emeralds are valued according to their size, clarity, color, and the quality of their cut - just like most other gems. The most expensive stones will be larger, saturated in color, and as clear as possible (emeralds are often heavily included), and cut accurately.

There are several alternative May birthstones. These vary according to different birthstone lists but are always green as a symbol of rebirth and renewal. These include green agate, chrysoprase, green serpentine, jade, and green turquoise. There's plenty of variety for those wanting something a little different for May.

Yvonne Foster



GO
HERE
THERE
EVERYWHERE

FIELD TRIPS

AMLS Field Trip Committee Report **May 2026**

PAST

Saturday April 11th – Sylacauga Marble Festival

AMLS member Randy Sandrik (who was GM of the quarries for 5 years) led our members on a trip to the high wall and overlook of the Quarry. We all got samples of the world’s purest white marble and were able to meet with several sculptors working on their incredible sculptures. A tour of the Library and Museum and a very informative video on the Magic of Marble rounded out a very interesting Saturday morning. See photos.





SAVE THESE DATES!

PRESENT

May

Saturday May 30th - 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**.



FUTURE

June

Saturday June 13th – Annual Picnic and Rock Swap (Veterans Park, Alabaster, AL)

See details in this newsletter.

July

TBA

August

Saturday August 15th - 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 4th, 5th, & 6th – AMSL Annual Gem and Mineral Show (Bessemer, AL)

Happy hounding,

Rick Halbrooks

Chairperson, Field Trip Committee

E: AMLS fieldtrips@gmail.com | P: 205-410-0233

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