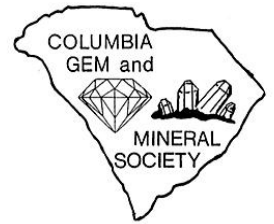




# Rocky Trails



January 2026

Volume 20 Issue 1

The Newsletter of the Columbia Gem and Mineral Society

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are ready to fill our calendar with lots of great activities for 2026! I pray that everyone had a wonderful Holiday season and are ready for 2026! Those that missed the Christmas party that Terry Tokaz pulled off for us last minute missed a good one! Lots of great gifts were given out!

Our new Program Chair, Cat Sawyer, is working up some great programs for us this year. If anyone has a suggestion(s) for our program presentations let me or Cat know. We are ready to make this a great year for COLUMBIA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY! Tim Anderson will give our first program for January. If you were working or just visiting the show this past November you may have seen Tim demonstrating Cabbing Opals. Tim will be our first presenter for 2026 and will share his knowledge and abilities on working with opals. It should be a great presentation so hopefully we'll see you next Monday January 19<sup>th</sup> at Hope Church at 7:00pm.

Until I see you all on January 19, have a wonderful week and remember, a smile and an act of kindness can make someone's day, so make someone's day a little better!

Patricia Stidom  
CGMS President

### Editor's notes:

I'm sorry to report that our fieldtrip to Little Pine Garnet mine has been canceled. There are, however, some fieldtrip postings in this Rocky Trails that may be of interest. The February DMC trip, led by CGMS member Walt Kabilus, is to Diamond Hill (see page 8). On page 6 are the details on this year's SFMS sponsored Rockhound Roundup. This is an opportunity to meet like-minded folks from throughout the Southeast and buy and/or swap material. As long as you are a member of CGMS, you can set up a table to sell your goods!

One last note, there's a membership form on page 13 or at [Join Our Club | Columbia Gem & Mineral Society](#). Use it. Also, enjoy the Annual Report (p. 14) submitted by Angela!

Ron Ahle

## NEXT MEETING

**January 19, 2026**

Socializing and refreshments at 7:00 pm.  
Meeting at 7:30 pm.

The January 2026 CGMS meeting will be held at **Hope Church** located at 2609 Seminole Road. It is off Broad River Rd. and is easily accessible from I-26 or I-20. Use the side door (close to the main part of the parking lot). We will meet in the Fellowship Hall. Please do not come into Hope Church before 6:30 pm, as we are not allowed in before that time.

### PROGRAM:

Giving the program for January will be club member Tim Anderson. Tim is an instructor at SFMS lapidary schools and will be demonstrating how to inlay synthetic and real opal chips into a stainless-steel ring blank. A full list of all items needed will be provided for anyone interested in making one on their own.

Ron Ahle and CGMS will provide door prizes.  
Refreshments will be provided by Olga Hall.

## Executive Meeting

January 26, 2026

Dinner: 6 pm, Meeting: 7 pm

Grecian Gardens, 2312 Sunset Blvd.,

West Columbia. Members are welcome to attend. Only executive members can vote.

### About the Programs

The program for January will be club member Tim Anderson presenting on working with opals. For the program in February, Scott Howard, State Geologist, with the aid of his SCDNR team, will cover a range of topics such as history of the Geologic Survey, current projects, how geology data contributes to the betterment of the State, long-range plans and projects, and current capacities and expertise. Note that the meeting will be on the **fourth Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>** instead of the third Monday, and will be **at the SC Geology Survey off Broad River Rd. at 5 Geology Rd.** instead of at Hope Church. For our March meeting, we will be welcoming back Ashby Gale, paleontologist from Charleston, who will be giving a presentation on ammonites.

Tim is an instructor at SFMS lapidary schools and will be demonstrating how to inlay synthetic and real opal chips into a stainless-steel ring blank. A full list of all items needed will be provided for anyone interested in making one on their own. Many of you may have met Tim at the show (see picture below) where he was demonstrating polishing some pretty amazing opals. Having seen some of his work, he is definitely a skilled artisan. If you like opals, this presentation is for you!



Tim Anderson demonstrating and polishing opals at the 2025 Show

### News From SFMS from Cindy Reed, SFMS Loadstar Editor

Happy New Year! Here's the link for the January edition of the SFMS Lodestar.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jHBVL0QUR2z6Nj8yr6LYitsET9togHpr/view?usp=sharing>

Rockhound Roundup info and app can be found at the end of the Lodestar of the Lodestar (*info on page 6 of the Rocky Trails*). They have several great articles this month. So be sure to check them out.

The Lodestar has a summary of the 2026 classes offered during the SFMS workshop week at William Holland. You can find more info and registration at

<https://www.sfmsworkshops.org/william-holland-classes> We're still waiting on the dates for Wildacres.

*(to access websites, press Ctrl, then click on link)*

### Social media Helps our Club Stay Social!

CGMS website: [www.cgms.rocks](http://www.cgms.rocks)

Facebook, Columbia Gem and Mineral Society, Inc:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100066320452494>

Facebook, Columbia Gem and Mineral Society, Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/322192978738281/>

Instagram: [@cgms\\_rocks](https://www.instagram.com/cgms_rocks)

Please like/follow our Facebook and Instagram pages and share posts to increase our reach on social media.

**South Carolina State Museum**  
**<http://scmuseum.org/events/upcoming-events/>**  
301 Gervais Street  
Columbia, SC 29201  
803-898-4921

Advance online ticket purchases are encouraged, especially if you wish to see planetarium and/or 4D shows.

**Hours of Operation:**

Mon: CLOSED.

Tue – Sat: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday: 12 to 5 p.m.

***Planetarium/ Theater Shows***

**BUGS: A 4D Experience®**

Explore the extraordinary hidden world of bugs! Narrated by the beloved Dame Judi Dench, Bugs 4D brings viewers on an up-close-and-personal adventure in the Borneo rainforests, using cutting-edge technology that magnifies these insects up to 250,000 times their normal size. Join the amazing giant Asian mantis and stunning swallowtail butterfly and many more as they hatch and grow in this unforgettable, spectacular 4D Experience® that reveals the tremendous life of bugs.

**Arora**

Explore the beauty of the Northern Lights in the new digital dome planetarium experience, *Áróra*! This immersive cinematic journey takes guests across remote Icelandic landscapes and into space to find and understand these mystical, eerie lights. During this award-winning show created by some of Iceland's best-known scientists, writers, photographers, and musicians, you will not only witness the beauty of the aurora above Earth but also explore how these stunning displays of colors have also been seen on other planets and moons throughout our galaxy.

21 mins. Tues. – Fri: 1:30 p.m., Sat: 11:30 am & 2:30 pm, Sun: 2:30 p.m.

**Habitat Earth**

This full dome planetarium show is narrated by Frances McDormand. The show features stunning visualizations of the natural world, as it takes you below the ocean's surface to explore the dynamic relationships found in kelp forest ecosystems, travel beneath the forest floor to see how Earth's tallest trees rely on tiny fungi to survive, and journey to new heights to witness the intricate intersection between human and ecological networks.

***Museum Special Exhibit:***

**Apollo 16 & Beyond: South Carolina in Space**

This new exhibition explores the Apollo 16 lunar mission and the historic moonwalk of SC astronaut Charles Duke. In addition to featuring many Apollo 16 objects, the exhibition will also highlight South Carolina scientists and engineers who have contributed to the field of aerospace research and exploration.

## News Worth Digging Up

### When rainforests died, the planet caught fire: New clues from Earth's greatest extinction

*Source:* Science Daily

*Date:* July 3, 2025

By Dr. Zhen Xu

The Permian-Triassic Mass Extinction - sometimes referred to as the "Great Dying," happened around 252 million years ago, leading to the massive loss of marine species and significant declines in terrestrial plants and animals. The event has been attributed to intense global warming triggered by a period of volcanic activity in Siberia, known as the Siberian Traps, but scientists had been unable to pinpoint why super-greenhouse conditions persisted for around five million years afterwards. "Fossil clues from this research show the Great Dying's lingering heat wasn't just volcanic but likely attributable to deforested tropics that stopped absorbing carbon thereby letting greenhouse gases spike and temperatures soar."

A team of international researchers led by the University of Leeds and the China University of Geosciences gathered new data which supports the theory that the demise of tropical forests, and their slow recovery, limited carbon sequestration resulting in high levels of CO<sub>2</sub> and a prolonged period of extreme heat. The team used analysis of a vast amount of fossils as well as clues about past climate conditions found in sedimentary rocks to map changes in plant productivity during the Permian-Triassic Mass Extinction. "Now, after years of fieldwork, analysis and simulations, the team have the data that supports a prolonged period of tropical biosphere collapse."

The researchers believe their results reinforce the idea that thresholds, or 'tipping points' exist in Earth's climate-carbon system which, when reached, means that warming can be amplified. Professor Mills, a coauthor, added: "There is a warning here about the importance of Earth's present day tropical forests. If rapid warming causes them to collapse in a similar manner, then we should not expect our climate to cool to preindustrial levels even if we stop emitting CO<sub>2</sub>.

"Indeed, warming could continue to accelerate in this case even if we reach zero human emissions. We will have fundamentally changed the carbon cycle in a way that can take geological timescales to recover, which has happened in Earth's past."

To read more about the fossils and the models used in this research, go to: [When rainforests died, the planet caught fire: New clues from Earth's greatest extinction | ScienceDaily](#)





**Graves Mountain  
Rock Swap and Dig  
April 17, 18,19  
Lincolnton, Georgia**

As of this posting, the dig is scheduled for April 17-19. No reservations are needed. If something changes, it will be posted here.

The mountain will be open to collecting from 8 am to 6 pm each day. All attendees must stop at the welcome table to sign a liability release and make a contribution/donation to help with the cost of providing porta johns, four wheeled vehicles, and golf carts. The dig will end, and everyone must be off the mountain by 6:00 p.m. each day.

**Rock Swap and Hot Food/Drinks:**

Junior will set aside an area in the upper parking lot for tables to be set up for daily rock swaps. Anyone who would like to set up a table(s), please contact Junior at the phone numbers listed below. Hot food cooked on the grill, cold drinks and chips will be available for purchase on the mountain during all three days of these events. There will be an area in the parking lot for vendors to sell and trade minerals. If you would like to set up a booth, contact Jr. at the phone number listed below. Hot food and drinks will be available for purchase on the mountain all three days.

<https://www.gamineral.org/ft/commercial/ftgravesmain.html>

**Contact Information:**

Clarence Norman Jr. (Junior) - 706-359-1544 (his business) or 706-401-3173 (his cell)

**THIS DIG IS OPEN TO ALL CLUBS and ROCKHOUNDS!**

**GRAVES MOUNTAIN CODE OF CONDUCT!**

Park your vehicle in the designated area at the end of the paved access road.

ALL pets must be kept under control and on a leash. The caretaker, Jr. Norman has final and absolute say as to where you may safely work. Ladders or power tools of any kind will not be allowed. (HAND TOOLS ONLY!). STAY AWAY FROM ALL HIGH WALLS! NO RAPPELLING OFF OF ANYTHING! NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO DRIVE THEIR VEHICLE ON ANY PART OF GRAVES MOUNTAIN BEYOND THE PARKING AREA! (The caretaker must accompany anyone driving beyond the parking area!) EVERYONE NEEDS TO BE OFF THE MOUNTAIN BY 6:00 p.m. (Absolutely no one is allowed on Graves Mountain after dark.)

**DIRECTIONS:** From Washington Georgia, drive east 11 miles on SR-378, look for mine entrance on right. From the Hardee's in Lincolnton, Georgia, drive approximately 5-1/2 miles west on SR-378. Look for the sign at the entrance to Graves Mountain on the left side of the road.

**Motels and Camping:**

Cullars Inn, Lincolnton, Georgia, 706-359-6161

Soap Creek Lodge, Clarks Hill Lake, Lincolnton, 706-359-4100

Elijah Clark State Park, 706-359-3458 / 800-864-7275

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## **AREA SHOWS**

*To verify the accuracy of a show date, go to the show's website or contact them directly.*

**February 7-8, 2026—MERRITT ISLAND, FLORIDA:** Show and sale; Central Brevard Rock & Gem Club; Sat. 9:00-5:00, Sun. 10-4; Kiwanis Recreation Center, 951 Kiwanis Island Park; Roz Mestre, (321) 431-0159; Email: roz.mestre@att.net; Website: [www.centralbrevardgems.com](http://www.centralbrevardgems.com)

**February 28-March 1, 2026—JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI:** Annual show; Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society; Mississippi Trade Mart on the State Fairgrounds, 1200 Mississippi Street Leslie A Lane, (601) 344-8171; Email: rock2lanes@gmail.com; Website: [www.missgems.org](http://www.missgems.org)

**March 13-15, 2026 —AUGUSTA, GEORGIA:** Annual show; Aiken Gem Mineral & Fossil Society and Augusta Gem & Mineral; Julian Smith Casino, 2200 Broad St; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 11-5; \$4 adult, \$6 weekend pass, children under 12 free with adult, cash at door only, please; Grab bags, Geode sales & cutting, Treasure Dig, Member displays • Lapidary demos • Hourly door prizes • Educational resource End-of-show GRAND PRIZE on Sunday ! (Attendance not required to win.) Dealers: • Gold • Silver • Fine and everyday jewelry • Loose gemstones • Cabochons • Crystals • Minerals; contact Debra Baer, (803) 295-7897; Email: [debbie.aikenrocks@gmail.com](mailto:debbie.aikenrocks@gmail.com); Website: <https://aikengmfs.org/>

8th Annual  
Southeast Federation  
Mineralogical Societies

## Rockhound Roundup

March 6-8, 2026  
9am to 4pm

**Suwannee River Music Park  
Live Oak, Florida**

*Join the fun at this outdoor event!*

- **Rough Rocks and Slabs**
- **Polished Stones**
- **Handmade Jewelry for Sale**
- **Lapidary & Silversmithing  
Tools & Equipment**

*Vendors must  
be a current  
member of an  
SFMS Club or  
Join a SFMS  
Club.*



For more information contact Barbi Beatty at [treasurer@southeastfed.org](mailto:treasurer@southeastfed.org)



### CGMS Name Tag

Would you like to have a CGMS name tag? They can be obtained at Irmo Trophy. An example is shown below. If you would like one, please contact Irmo Trophy by email so they have the correct spelling of your name and tell them you are requesting a Columbia Gem and Mineral Society name tag. The cost is \$7. **Irmo Trophy Co.**, 803-798-3735; 5430 Old Bush River Rd., Columbia, SC 29212 [irmotrophy@gmail.com](mailto:irmotrophy@gmail.com)



### The Club is selling T-shirts

We have two colors available, one tie-dyed (seen below) and one black. We have sizes ranging from medium to XXL currently available. If you can't make it to the meetings and would like to get a T-shirt, contact one of the officers in the club. We have limited supplies so don't wait!



## Columbia Gem and Mineral

## Society



## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Year \_\_\_\_\_

(Membership Year runs January 1 – December 31)

<https://www.cgms.rock>Check one: MEMBERSHIP DUES

Individual	\$25	_____	\$13	_____
Family	\$30	_____	\$15	_____
		Jan 1		July 1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

For those with privacy concerns: If you do not want your home phone or physical address published in the Club Roster please circle or highlight:    No phone    No address.

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP: Spouse and children under 18 yrs. living at the same address.

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CLUB PARTICIPATION: Please indicate which committee you can help with:

Field Trips\_\_ Membership\_\_ Newsletter\_\_ Programs\_\_ Social\_\_ Faceting Guild\_\_

Workshop\_\_ Show Chair\_\_ Publicity\_\_ Sunshine\_\_ Rookie Rockhounds\_\_

May we call on you to work with a Board Member on a committee or project? \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Columbia Gem & Mineral Society (and) mail to: PO Box 6333  
Columbia, SC 29260

Previous Membership in another Mineral Society? Club \_\_\_\_\_

Have you held an office in another club? Club/Office \_\_\_\_\_

Do you collect minerals and/or fossils? \_\_\_\_\_

What lapidary skills and interests do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

## Columbia Gem & Mineral Society (CGMS) Historian's Summary of the Year 2025

The **Columbia Gem and Mineral Society** was established in 1965, making 2025 the Club's 60<sup>th</sup> year.

### Officers for 2025:

- President – Patricia Stidom
- Vice President – Jim Cobb
- Secretary – Sophie Grimsley
- Treasurer - Angela Valvasori

### The Committee Chairs were:

- Membership .....Sheila Frame/open
- Auctioneer..... Ron Ahle
- Club Liaison.....Jim Cobb
- Faceting Guild.....Tom Daniels
- Facebook.....Sue Shrader/Instagram...Angela Valvasori
- Field Trip..... Casey Tyler
- Historian.....Angela Valvasori
- Librarian.....Sheila Frame
- Newsletter Editor.....Ron Ahle
- Programs.....Sue Shrader
- Show Chair.....Angela Valvasori/Olga Yukhno
- Sunshine .....Abbie Gates/Sheila Frame
- Website.....Steven Coker
- Workshop.....Gary Hert
- New workshop location....Cheryl Coker

At the end of 2025 the Club had **142 members**: 115 adults and 42 juniors.

**Rocky Trails:** The CGMS newsletter, the Rocky Trails, was issued monthly. The newsletter was distributed to members by email.

The 57th Annual CGMS Show was held at Jamil Temple on November 21, 22 and 22. The Show was a success thanks to the hard work of the show committee, club volunteers, and our highly valued vendors. Show planning meetings were held monthly starting in April. We had 38 vendors, completely filling the available space. The dealers offered jewelry, beads, mineral specimens, fossils and more for sale. We held a dinner for the dealers on Thursday evening. Show attendance was 1222, similar to last year. The show opened on Friday at 10 am and closed on Sunday at 5 pm. Members set up display cases exhibiting fossils and minerals as well as the South Carolina state stone (amethyst) and the South Carolina state stone (blue granite), and the raffle prizes: grape agate and a selenite crystal cluster. Members demonstrated copper and silver jewelry-making, flint knapping and wire wrapping. The geode cutting saw was busy out front, with members selling and cutting beautiful geodes. Grab bags were offered for \$2, \$5 and \$10. Door prizes donated by dealers and members were awarded hourly. Instead of a grand door prize, we had a raffle for two prizes awarded at the end of the show.

**Monthly Meetings** were held on the third Monday for the general meeting and the fourth Monday for the executive meeting. The General Meetings were held at Hope Church. Guest speakers gave educational programs. Executive meetings were held at Grecian Gardens in West Columbia.

January: Walt Kubilius gave a program on “Quartz Veins and Pegmatites.” He described the differences between them, and how they formed. He explained how amethysts occur at places such as Diamond Hill and why aquamarine is found at the Ray Mine in North Carolina.  
Door prizes: Sue Shrader Refreshments: Angela Valvasori

▪ February: Show & Tell. Members brought a rock, mineral, gemstone or piece of jewelry that they collected on a field trip, made in a lapidary class or at home, or an item from their collection. Certificates were awarded to the prettiest and ugliest items, as voted on by the members.  
Door prizes: Patricia and Tom Stidom Refreshments: Loree and Banks Ratchford

▪ March: Ron Ahle gave a presentation about the evolution of plants as indicated through the fossil record. He spoke about the earliest plants from the pre-Cambrian seas to the amazing diversity found today. Ron has visited many fossil sites where plant impressions and fossils are found and showed plant fossils he has collected.  
Door prizes: Gary Hert Refreshments: Meaghan Westfall and Bri Tribbett

▪ April: Chris Glass gave an interactive crystal quiz. Chris has an extensive rock and fossil collection and has been collecting for almost 50 years. She is a member of the Aiken, SC Gem, Mineral & Fossil Society and The Columbia Gem and Mineral Society.  
Door prizes: Susan Richardson and Carol Elliott Refreshments: Patricia Stidom and Pam Etheridge

▪ May: Cindy Lee of the Palmetto Shell Club gave a presentation on shell collecting in Florida and South Carolina and showed the artistic creations she has made from shells she collected.  
Door prizes: Ron Ahle Refreshments: various members

▪ June: Fossils, Minerals, Jewelry and other geology or lapidary items were sold in a silent auction. CGMS has received many donations and these items, along with those brought by members, were auctioned. Proceeds went to members and to CGMS.  
Door prizes: no door prizes in June Refreshments: Carol Elliott and Susan Richardson

▪ July: Gary Hert, Conry Davis, and Daniel Miller gave a presentation on how to make cabochons. They brought in a lapidary machine and cabochons in many stages of creation to explain the process, as well as displaying many beautiful, finished cabochons.  
Door prizes: Terry and Liz Gregory Refreshments: Terry and Liz Gregory

▪ August: Ron Clamp gave a presentation on granite and how it is used for memorials. Ron Clamp is a third-generation stone carver and a native of Elberton, Georgia, the Granite Capitol of the World. Ron specializes in granite memorials, statuary, dimensional stone and architectural carving. His carvings can be found around the United States and nine other countries.  
Door prizes: Tom Stidom Refreshments: the Wenzel family

▪ September: Members brought finds from the Arkansas quartz collecting trip and described the mines they visited.  
Door prizes: Chris Glass Refreshments: Pat and Jim Carter



- October: Greg Dillon gave a presentation on gold panning. Greg, a club member, is well versed in gold panning and showed pictures of the equipment, how to use it and where to go.

Door prizes: Ron Ahle

Refreshments: Casey Tyler

- November: Show and Tell. Members brought minerals they collected and lapidary items they made and described finding and making these items.

Door prizes: Daniel Miller

Refreshments: Laura Bailey and Catherine Sawyer

- December: CGMS hosted a holiday party on Monday, December 15 at the Cayce Historical Museum.

A **club picnic** was held at Sesquicentennial State Park on November 8. We had a beautiful fall day with fall foliage and perfect weather! The nature walk was very enjoyable, and the birds did not disappoint! When the grill got fired up it was covered with brats and sausages, a remarkable sight.

### CGMS Field trips:

Since new field trip chair, Casey Tyler, filled the previously vacant position, we had club-specific field trips for CGMS members in 2025:

- In February, Columbia Gem and Mineral Society members were invited to join the Aiken club on a field trip to an Augusta area mine.
- May 10, CGMS panned for gold in Union, SC
- May 31, CGMS collected at Graves Mountain in Lincolnton, Georgia.
- June 24, CGMS went to Propst Farm in NC to collect corundum (rubies and sapphires)
- Week of September 8, CGMS went to various mines in Mt. Ida, Arkansas to collect quartz crystals
- October 4, CGMS sponsored the October DMC field trip, which was a boat trip to Morris Island to collect fossils deposited in dredge spoils from Charleston Harbor.

**In addition, the Southeastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.** field trips were available to club members:

January: No SFMS field trip in January.

February: Emerald Hollow Mine Hiddenite, NC. Over sixty minerals can be collected including emerald, aquamarine, sapphire, garnet, topaz, amethyst, citrine, rutile, and tourmaline. There is an abundance of world class smoky and clear quartz crystals. The rare mineral hiddenite can be found only in the Hiddenite area.

March: Hogg Mine, LaGrange, GA. The mine contains a large pegmatite with beryl, rose quartz, smokey quartz, tourmaline, muscovite, and kaolinite.

April: Bayou Pierre, Hazlehurst, Copiah County, MS. 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, petrified wood, fossil brachiopods, bryozoans, coral, crinoid stems, and other gravel.

May: Smith County Lime Pit Smith County MS. The site is an Early Oligocene marine deposit of the Vicksburg group. It consists largely of fossiliferous limestones and clays. Here you can collect a variety of shark teeth, mollusks (scallop & oyster shells, moldic gastropods & bivalves), echinoids like sand dollars and sea urchins, crabs, bryozoans, and other marine fossils.

January 2026

June: A private dig site in Conover, NC, to collect small books of muscovite mica, smoky quartz crystals, feldspar, tourmaline, with some occurrences of green beryl, amethyst, and ilmenite.

July: Bone Valley Experience, Wauchula, Florida to collect fossilized shark teeth including smaller species such as lemon, bull, and dusky and a chance to find larger snaggletooth, mako, and megalodon teeth.

August: Private Cattle Ranch, Rockmart, Georgia. Exposed in the soil is the Longview Chert of the Knox Group which is Late Cambrian to Early Ordovician in age. The chert is multi-colored with some specimens being an agate.

September: Cumberland Furnace, Cumberland Furnace, TN, to collect slag. The slag was a byproduct of making iron. Some of the slag is quite colorful in shades of blue and green, some with swirls.

October: CGMS sponsored the October DMC field trip, which was a boat trip to Morris Island to collect fossils deposited in dredge spoils from Charleston Harbor.

November: Norris Lake, TN to collect Upper Ordovician marine fossils along the shore of Norris Lake, including stromatolites and brachiopods.

There was no SFMS field trip in December.

**Lapidary Workshop:** Although CGMS did not have a lapidary workshop location in 2025, a limited amount of equipment, rock saws and cabbing machines were operational in a storage unit. Members learned how to cut, polish and cab under the tutelage of Gary Hert. Cheryl Coker is leading the effort to locate a property for CGMS to purchase to set up or build a workshop.

#### **Social Media:**

- The CGMS website: [www.cgms.rocks](http://www.cgms.rocks).
- CGMS Facebook page and a Facebook group.
- CGMS Instagram: [@cgms\\_rocks](https://www.instagram.com/cgms_rocks)

The QR code for our website:



**Photos** from the year are provided in the Attachment.

Prepared by,

*Angela valvasori*

Historian

Columbia Gem and Mineral Society

**Attachment  
Columbia Gem and Mineral Society 2025 Activities**

**January Meeting**



Angela Valvasori setting up the projector



Social time



Speaker Walt Kubilius

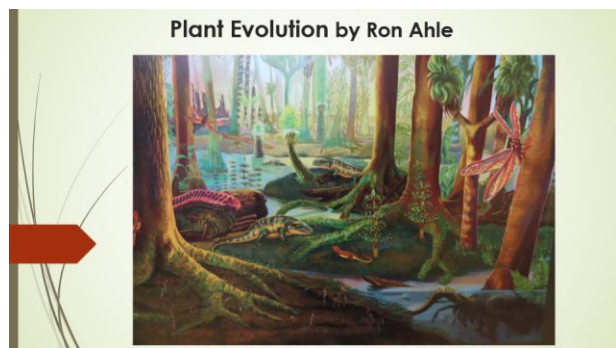


Field Trip Coordinator Casey Tyler

**March Meeting**



Social time



Ron Ahle's Presentation



**May Field Trip, Union County Gold Panning**



**June CGMS Field Trip to Propst Farm**



**July Meeting**



Presentation Materials



Cabbing Equipment





Finished Cabochons



Social Time

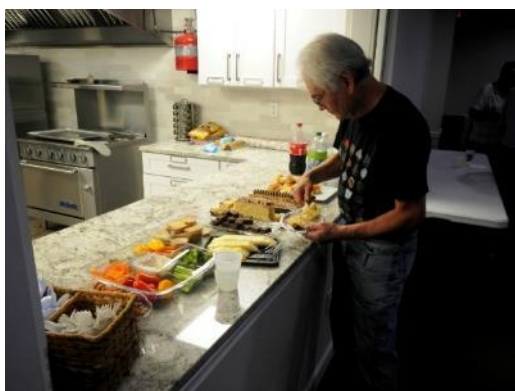


Presenters: Gary, Conry and Daniel



Angela and Ron

### August Meeting



Daniel enjoying refreshments



Social time

September Meeting



Quartz collected on Arkansas field trip



Ron Ahle



Show and tell: Brachiopods



Show and tell



President Patricia Stidom

Arkansas Field Trip, September



Field trip leader,  
Casey, with his crystal



Casey & Tom



Tom Stidom, Robert Gartman,  
Casey Tyler, Patricia Stidom





Ron and Angela



The view from Coleman Mine

**October, CGMS Hosting SFMS Fieldtrip to Morris Island**



Ron off the boat



Fossils & artifacts found



Morris Island

**CGMS Picnic, November**



Nature walk



Lunchtime



Grilling

CGMS Gem & Mineral Show

**Columbia Gem & Mineral Society**  
**Gem, Mineral, & Jewelry Show**  
Jamil Temple  
206 Jamil Rd.  
Columbia, SC 29210  
Nov. 21, 10:00 – 6:00  
Nov. 22, 10:00 – 6:00  
Nov. 23, 12:00 – 5:00

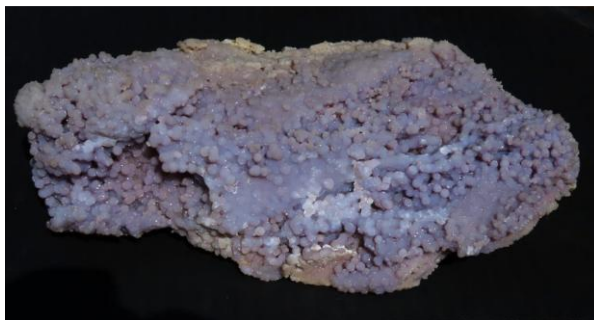
**57th Annual 2025**

Adults \$7.... Children 12 & Under Free  
All Military & Dependents Free with ID

Please Copy  
www.cgms.rocks  
803-736-9317

**\$1.00 Off**

2025 Show Flyer



Raffle prize – grape agate



Raffle prize – selenite crystal cluster



Ron's display case



Madeleine's display case





Mystery bags



Vendors



Vendors



Vendors



Geodes



Geodes



Pam and Tony demonstrating copper and silver smithing



Daniel demonstrating wire-wrapping

The Columbia Gem and Mineral Society is an organization of persons associated together to promote popular interest in and to provide means for the exchange of knowledge of the Earth Sciences – Geology, Mineralogy, and Paleontology – and of the related Arts – Lapidary and other. The Society is a member of the Southeast Federation Mineralogical Societies Inc. and an affiliate of the American Federation of Mineralogical Society Inc.

### **2026 OFFICERS and COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

President..... Patricia Stidom. ....  
 Vice President..... Jim Carter. ....  
 Treasurer..... Angela Valvasori.....  
 Secretary..... Sophie Grimsley.....

#### **COMMITTEES**

Membership ..... Liz Gregory.....  
 Auctioneer..... Ron Ahle.....  
 Club Liaison..... Jim Cobb.....  
 Faceting Guild..... Tom Daniels.....  
 Facebook..... Sue Shrader .....  
 Field Trip..... Casey Tyler.....  
 Historian..... Angela Valvasori.....  
 Librarian..... Sheila Frame.....  
 Newsletter Editor..... Ron Ahle.....  
 Program..... Catherine Sawyer.....  
 Show.....open  
 Sunshine ..... Sheila Frame.....  
 Website..... Terry Gregory .....  
 Workshop..... Gary Hert.....  
 Workshop Location Special Committee.... Cheryl Coker.....



**CGMS Website**

***Please visit our website:***

<http://www.cgms.rocks>

Webmaster: Terry Gregory

**Monthly Meeting**

Typically, the meetings are held the third Monday of each month. Socializing and refreshments at 7:00 pm; Meeting at 7:30 pm.

**Executive Board Meetings:**

Typically, the meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month. Meal is at 6:00 pm. Meeting is at 7:00 pm.

**Rocky Trails  
PO Box 6333  
Columbia, SC 29260**