



Rock Talk



July 11th Meeting Program

The meeting program was not available at publishing time.

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The Cover

Dorwin recently purchased a slab of Kambaba jasper, which was cut from a stromatolite.

Continued on page five

The Meeting as I Saw it



Dorwin Skinner



The June Club Meeting

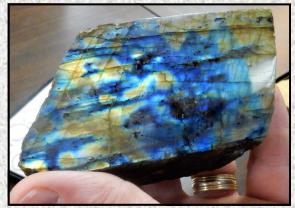
Summer is in full swing and so was the Withlacoochee Rockhound Club on Wednesday night. I walked in and specimens were already on the table. Linda was looking thru Victoria's collection helping her identify pieces. Dave was on her other side of the room helping with the specimen identification. As I headed to the back of the room to drop off my cake, I could see that Lynn had several specimens in front of her. I left my cake in the trusty hands of Michele. The last I saw of it she was slicing it into wedges. I checked out Lynn's Vulcan mine acquisition. She had cleaned the matrix thus exposing the fossils that lay below. I could see several examples of sea life gastropods, bivalves and an echinoid were clearly visible. John had also been to the mine and collected chert. He polished a few pieces, releasing the beauty of this local mineral. Cut and polished it would make a nice cabochon for mounting.

Another table had a bunch of cabochons that were in the process of being polished. Over on the polishing machines Roberta and Michele were polishing their finds. Just as I was lining myself up to enjoy some of the delicious offerings on the snack bar, I could hear Judith demanding attention, she was ready to start the meeting. While everyone's attention was on Judith I raided the snack bar. Shrimp, chocolate covered donut holes, and a delicious cake covered my plate. Everyone thought I was taking pictures, but I wasn't.

After a short meeting Melodye put on a video about gemstones. After the video she had plenty of specimens for everyone to exam. I was one of the last to leave at 9 PM. I can't believe it, I left my coffee cup behind. The gods and Melodye were looking out for me. Anyone that knows me knows that I always have my coffee cup and I really felt bad about this one. Thanks Melodye you saved me.

Welcome New Members

Welcome new Withlacoochee Rockhounds club members **DeWayne Anderson**, Satellite Beach, FL; **Karen Fernandez**, **Joe Jaconi**, and **Sea Anne Chandler**, Aripeka.



Labradorite brought in by Melodye



Calories, but who cares?



Fossil specimens collected by Lynn at the Vulcan Mine



Linda helping Victoria identify her specimens



Melodye showing examples of gemstones



Michele and Roberta at the machines



Agatized coral brought in my Virginia



Gems from Melodye's collection



Hernando County, FL

The June Jewelry Class

by Dorwin Skinner

It would seem that the class loves to use hammers, and today was another noisy day. Lots of hammering, yet they were smiling most of the time. First, the class took perfectly good beads and smashed them with a hammer. Then they poured them into a bezel and covered them with Mod Podge (an all-in-one glue, sealer, and finish). Then they added more smashed beads and then more Mod Podge. After letting it cure...there it was, a nice looking pendant.

Next was more hammering to shape a thin strip of metal with small holes. Again there were lots of smiles. I think they were taking their aggression out by swinging that hammer. Good thing I did not have a headache. Then the students bent a bunch of pins, added beads, and strung them on that thin piece of metal, added a small chain, and there it was, another masterpiece. The students are getting quite good at this and it shows in the quality of their pieces. Some are even making their own designs at home. Next month promises to be a good one, a little quieter, with no hammering involved. I think I will leave my earplugs at home.





Adding beads



First you hammer and form the strip





Gary shows off his creations



Jan helps Joyce bend the pins



The cover from page two

Stromatolites are colonial structures created by cyanobacteria (commonly called bluegreen algae) are among the oldest fossils on earth, being found in rocks over three billion years old. Once the dominant life form on the planet, stromatolites are now found in only a few places, such as Madagascar. Stromatolite Kambaba jasper is from the South Africa Rift that runs from South Africa to Madagascar, an island nation off the east coast of Africa.

Cyanobacteria form these mound-like structures by growing through sediment, binding the particles together, resulting in successive layers, which, over very long time periods, can harden to form rocks.

These structures may be from a fraction of an inch to several feet in diameter. Cyanobacteria were likely responsible for the creation of the oxygen in the Earth's early atmosphere. They were the dominant life form on earth for over two billion years. Today they are nearly extinct, living a precarious existence in only a few localities worldwide.

Fossil stromatolites, a sedimentary fossilized rock, constitute our earliest and most pervasive record of life on earth. Although many stromatolites are fossils, there are locations on the modern-day Earth where stromatolites are still forming.

Jasper is a microcrystalline variety of quartz; a silicon dioxide mineral with a hardness of 6.5 to 7. Jaspers can include up to twenty percent foreign materials, which account for their often wide variety of colors and patterns.

Kambaba jasper is sometimes called Kabamba jasper.

There are ongoing debates about the

origin this stone.

Information from http://www.spiritrockshop.com/ Kambaba Jasper.html...*editor*

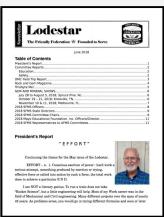


Polished kambaba jasper

Loadstar

members of the Withlacoochee Rockhounds, are also a members of the Southeast

Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. One of the benefits of being associated with the Federation is that we receive their monthly newsletter, the *Loadstar*. I have been posting the *Loadstar* on our website under the CLUB NEWSLET-



TERS page for quite some time. The publication can be downloaded from our website at: https://www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com/club-newsletters.html

This month's issue has an article about a dig, where everyone found very impressive

specimens of kayanite.

Also in the June issue is a link to the D.M.C. program (once known as the Dixie Mineral Council) for SFMS members. The information explains how participants can attend monthly field trips throughout the southeast section of the US.....editor

Tuesday Workshop at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens' Center

Withlacoochee Rockhounds is giving workshops on wire wrapping (stones), chain making (jump rings) and possibly other related skills at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens' Center in Spring Hill. The workshops are normally on the first Tuesday of the month from 9:00 AM until 12:00 noon The cost per workshop is \$1.00. To participate in the workshops, one must be a member of the Withlacoochee Rockhounds, which covers dues to the Weeki Wachee Citizens Club

Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens' Center. 3357 Susan Dr. Spring Hill FL 34606

For more information call Judith at: 352-587-1702

Next Workshop July 3rd at 9:00 AM

The class will be making dominoes. Judith Birx will be teaching the class. There will be no charge, just bring a rock to wrap.



Secretary's Report



Melodye Steverson



Withlacoochee Rockhounds Monthly Meeting Minutes Meeting 6/13/2018

- The meeting was called to order by club president Judith Birx at 7:05 pm.
- We all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silent prayer.
- There were three new members to recognize; Karen, Joe and Anna.
- There were two guests in attendance; Victoria McIntire and Linda Dalton.
- Dave Letasi made a motion to accept the minutes of our May meeting as distributed by email, the motion was seconded by Mark Moore and it was passed by all members.
- Club treasurer Janet Wheeler gave the Treasurer's Report.
- A motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as stated was made by Dave Davis, it was seconded by Dave Letasi, and approved by all members.

Old Business

- President Birx announced that our club's non-profit status has been re-instated and there will be no further problems with it.
- She also stated that we need five volunteers for the Gem Show Committee, and to please see Ralph Barber to sign up.
- Judith further stated that there has been

- only one volunteer for the nominating committee. We need several more. The committee members will discuss potential nominees, then approach those members to speak to them regarding their willingness to run. In this way, they will compile a competent group of nominees for the election in December. See any board member to join the election committee. If you have questions, see club president Birx.
- Carol Hechler with the Senior Center, gave an update on her quest to pay off the personal bank loan she took out to re-roof the Senior Center. She once again requested each member to donate \$40 to help her pay off the loan.

New Business

- Louise Amato announced there will be a craft fair held at the Senior Center in October. There is one table left for rental. Also she asked members to bring in their "yard sale stuff" to be sold, with proceeds going to the roof loan payoff.
- A suggestion was made to have a raffle at the gem show with the proceeds going to the roof fund.
- Club president Birx asked the members who had suggestions, to please come to the board meeting to offer their suggestion for board discussion. *Members who wish to address the Board must request approval no less than 72 hours before the Board of Directors meeting. (per bylaws)
- Club president Birx once again explained our endowment fund with the geology department at USF, and stated that we would be donating \$1000 to that fund.
- The monthly jewelry class will be held on Tuesday July 3rd and will be taught by Ju-

- dith Birx. There will be no charge, just bring a rock to wrap.
- Next month's refreshments will be provided by Melodye Steverson, Michele Evans, John Fusco, and Judith Birx.
- Dave Letasi made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Moore seconded the motion and it was passed by all.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:24pm. Minutes respectfully submitted by club secretary Melodye Steverson.

What is It?

Can you identify the specimen below?



Answer in this Rock Talk.

Last month's "What is It?" was Peacock ore



Our Website

www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Next Meeting, Wednesday July 11th at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center



A Double Whammy

Our club members have many various interests in the many types of rocks and minerals that make up our earth's surface. Some of our club members are delighted with fossils and minerals while others enjoy precious gemstones. On rare occasions nature combines these into one.

Opal is one of my all time favorite gemstones. Opal is a hydrated amorphous form of silica that sometimes replaces shells and bones as they fossilize. Everyone in our club knows that I am crazy about fossils. On rare occasions fossil animal remains actually become replaced by opal. I call this a double "whammy" fossil specimen. Unfortunately opal fossils are rare.

Over the last fifty years a number of rare opal replaced fossils have been found in the opal mines at Coober Pedy, Australia. Among the rarities are the remains of Cretaceous Period seashells, plant wood, dinosaur bones and teeth. The rarest fossil found so far, is the skeleton of an ancient marine Pliosaur, that the Australians call "Eric". Pliosaurs were large marine reptiles that looked like a Plesiosaur. They had a shorter neck, and one skeleton (Kronosaurus) found in Australia reached over fifty feet long. Eric's bones are completely covered in iridescent opal. Occasionally ammonites are covered with a thin coating of opal. These are highly prized by collectors. Many examples have been mined in Alberta Canada. They are famous for their deep red, blue, and green, pearl-like iridescence.

Every now and then fossil opal seashells

are available to collectors on the Internet. Usually they are very pricey. Jewelry formed from these marine shells is known as "ammolite". Also many opals from Coober Pedy sold at gem shows are actually fragmented fossil seashell, and some of you might actually own one.

May you all have a fantastic summer of collecting.



Coober Pedy opal



Opal fossil Baculite



Opalized fossil pendant



Opalized marine fossil



Opal Baculite

Withlacoochee Rockhounds



Bench Tips by Brad Smith



Bench Tips for Jewelry Making and Broom Casting for Creative Jewelry are available on Amazon

Save When Buying Silver

Silver products like sheet, wire, and casting shot are sold by the Troy ounce at what is called the spot price. That is what companies pay for the pure metal on the commodities market, and the spot price changes daily.

But in addition to the spot price, there is also a cost to fabricate the metal into wire or sheet, so the price of the item you buy is the cost of the metal plus the cost to make it. Different products have different fabrication charges because each takes a different amount of labor. Also, different companies will have different fabrication charges because of local labor rates and their desired profit margin.

You can save money by finding a company with a lower fabrication charge. Also, note that the fabrication charge per ounce is less on larger orders, so you can save more by buying more. Find a friend to place a joint order and split the shipping charges.

But for casting purposes, there's an even better way to save. Buy your silver at a coin store. They sell bars and rounds in pure and Sterling for the spot price plus about a dollar per ounce.

The local coin shop adds only a small profit over the spot price. So I save about three dollars per ounce, pay no shipping

charges, don't have to wait for mail order, and support a local business.



Silver Rounds

Sawing Jump Rings

The difficult part of making jump rings for me has always been holding the coil while cutting off the individual rings. I use a saw to get the best fit when closing the rings later. I've seen all sorts of suggestions for ways to hold the coil, but the one that works best for me is this little jig made from scrap wood.

It's about two inches wide and four to five inches long with a groove cut down its length to cradle the coil of wire and a thin stop attached to the front end.

To cut the rings, thread your saw blade through the coil, hold the coil down in the groove and against the front stop, and saw through the bottom of the coil at about a 40 degree angle.

Don't forget to use some wax or cutting lube. It really does make a difference. If you don't believe me, do an experiment while you're cutting several rings. Count how many rings can be cut before the blade breaks. First, do the test without

lube, and then do it again while adding some lube to the blade after cutting every 8-10 rings.

It's the best way I've ever found to hold the coils easily and securely. If the coil doesn't move, you break fewer blades. And it is safer than some other techniques because you are cutting away from your fingers.















Learn New Jewelry Skills With Brad's How-To-Do-It Books

Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith

Withlacoochee Rockhounds Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Date 6/19/2018

Attending Board members; Judith Birx, Melodye Steverson, Ralph Barber, Dorwin Skinner, and Linda Spaulding. Also in attendance was member John Fusco.

- Board meeting started at 6:35pm and was held at the Weeki Wachee Senior Center.
- Club president Judith Birx stated that she had emailed to each of the Board members regarding the reinstatement of the club's non-profit status and asked each one to keep a copy of the message for their records.
- She then welcomed member John Fusco to the meeting and noted that he is considering running for office at the next election and wanted to attend the board meeting to familiarize himself with the workings of the club.
- There was discussion of buying wheels and a saw blade for the club's machines. Dorwin Skinner made a motion to purchase the five wheels (\$72.50 each) and one saw blade (around \$45) that are needed. Ralph Barber seconded the motion, and it was passed by the Board.
- Club president Birx brought up the Election Committee. We have only one volunteer and need more. The Board members were encouraged to talk to members to see who might be interested.
- The next topic on the agenda was the gem show:
- Linda Spaulding spoke about her ideas for the gem show kid's table that she and Fred Hindershot put on last year. She would like to set up a work night close to the show date to have members help fill the free bags for the children. She also said she wants our junior members to help with the show so they feel more a part of the membership, not "just a kid". She feels this is a good learning place for kids and that the elder club members should mentor the young ones. She would like to have all members involved in teaching the juniors. She has an idea that the juniors should be able to complete assigned tasks and earn credits to enable them to "buy" items from a club "kid's store". They could help set up at meetings, at the gem show and clean up after. There could be a kid's only drawing at the show, run by junior members. She would like kids to welcome other kids to the meeting and the show. The parents will have to get involved in making this happen, but Linda will be the pivot point for starting the trend. She will present her ideas to the membership at a monthly meeting.
- Linda said she needed more brown paper bags for the free kid's bags, and needs more club business cards. The gem show committee will handle that for her.
- Many ideas were suggested for the kids to get involved as well as ways in which they can earn points. Discussion will continue next month.
- Dorwin Skinner proposed having a silent auction during the gem show, every two hours. The silent auction items could be anything, but must be valuable.
- Club president Birx wants to give thank you notes to the vendors. She wants to buy two gift cards for a drawing among the non-member (vendors only).
- Ralph Barber wants to provide nametags for the vendors.
- Dorwin Skinner stated that our displays need to be improved or replaced.
- President Birx wants to continue getting suggestions from our vendors.
- Ralph Barber mentioned fossil boxes that have interchangeable parts for displays.
- President Birx asked Ralph to set up a meeting in July for the gem show committee.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Ralph Barber. Judith Birx seconded the motion, and it was approved by the Board

The meeting ended at 7:48pm.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Melodye Steverson

Rock Talk

Wildacres Workshop August 20-26, 2018

http://sfmsworkshops.com/

Tuition \$395

Full descriptions of class and instructors on website



Casting - Bill Harr

This class will teach silver casting for beginner and intermediate silversmithing. The emphasis will be on production centrifugal casting, meaning techniques for high reliability. The class will teach centrifugal and vacuum casting, wax modeling, sprueing, investing, burnout, casting, finishing and polishing, rubber mold making and wax injection. Steam casting will be covered if there is

Lab Fee: US\$100 Estimated Materials Cost: US\$100-wow



Beginning Chain-Maillé Jewelry- Roy Deere

This class is an introduction to one of the popular and fastest growing areas of jewelry making. Students will learn the proper way to open/close jump rings, basic patterns of linking the rings to form intricate chains, and finishing techniques to make the chains into wearable jewelry. The class will consist of a couple of pre-selected projects to teach the basic techniques followed by other projects which each student can individually select. Class Fee: \$50 to \$150



Intermediate Chain-Maillé Jewelry-Roy Deere

The class will introduce the student to such advanced techniques as non-round jump ring shapes, jump rings made from different wire shapes, beaded enhancements, mixed metals, dangles, drapes, and many other enhancement techniques that can be applied to traditional designs to make them very unique. We will also examine some more complicated patterns and learn approaches to doing them which make the process much easier. Class Fee: \$75 to \$250



Fused Chain-Maille Jewelry- Roy Deere

In the Fused Chain-Maillé class we will explore the construction of necklaces, bracelets, and earrings which have all of their ends "soldered" together. Work will be done with Argentium wire. Argentium is a special class of Sterling Silver that has Germanium added to replace a small amount of the Copper in the Sterling. This changes some of the properties of the silver. Specifically it allows the silver to be fused. Class Fee: \$100 to \$300



Introduction to Gem ID - Teresa Polly

The course will be an Introduction to Gem ID. We will cover how to use a microscope, loupe, refractometer, polariscope, dicroscope, spectrascope and specific gravity set up to help identify stones. We will start with basic mineral identification. We will cover typical stone inclusions and how to tell natural stones from lab created stones. If you have stones you would like to ID we can work on those for show and tell. The class fee is \$10.00.



Metal Clay - Judi Talley

Judi will introduce you to the fascinating medium of metal clay and demonstrate how every day moments in nature can be captured permanently in metal. While all levels of metal clay interest is welcome, I will be concentrating on capturing natural forms. Using gathered plant materials, we will make one fine-silver pendant, then expand into the alloy clays of bronze and brass, to experience the differences between working with different alloys. Class Fee \$75



Metalwork Special Projects - Jeff Sheer

Wildacres Workshop August 20-26, 2018

http://sfmsworkshops.com/

Tuition \$395 Full descriptions of class and instructors on website

After taking one of the excellent beginning classes the Federation offers most people want to learn more but might not be sure what direction to go in. Most have a few unfinished projects in their tool box that need a technique or two in order to finish them. Finishing these pieces or starting something from scratch is where this class comes in. Jeff will not tell you what to make. He prefers you to tell him what you want to make and where you are stumped. Class Fee: \$55



Silver I – Morning Sherrod

In this class the students will be taught the fundamental skills needed for them to advance in the wonderful world of silver jewelry making. You will learn proper sawing technique, torch soldering, flex shaft usage. Projects will be rings, pendants, and bracelets. Lab fees cover the cost of instructor provided tools, expendables and materials included in the 3 project kits. Additional materials and silver will be available for purchase. Lab Fee: \$125.00 Materials Cost: \$50-\$200



Wire - Rowan Rose-Morgan

Students will enjoy a fun-filled week while learning the techniques and skills necessary to make their own wire wrapped jewelry. All that will be necessary to become a good wire artist after the class is over will be practice, practice, practice. Students will be making bracelets, pendants, rings, earrings, and other project as time allows using mostly square half-hard wire. Tools kits will be available for use in class.Lab Fee: \$30 Estimated Materials Cost: US\$100-\$200



Gem Trees - Jerri Heer

This class will start with the basic skills of gem tree making, and graduate to an exploration of multiple styles and advanced design of truly beautiful and species specific trees. We will discuss and study a variety of construction methods, as well as how to plan and create our own patterns. Lab fee includes wire, leaf stones, bases and materials to make at least one small basic tree, one medium tree and one large tree. All instructions, patterns and tools will be included.

Lab Fee: US \$80 Estimated Materials Cost: US \$0-150

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Membership Form

2018

Complete this form and bring it with you to the Withlacoochee Rockhound meeting. Attach your membership dues to this form.

\$15.00 for an individual member or \$25.00 for a family **Annual Dues:**

Please Print Clearly

| Primary Member | | | |
|---|---|---|---------------------------------------|
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| Renewing members check here if no change in information below | Change in informa | tion below | |
| Additional family members: | | |] |
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| Email Address: | | | |
| Give this completed form along with your check for dues made out to "Withlacoochee Rock-hounds" to club secretary Janet Wheeler at the club meeting. Or mail the form and your check to Withlacoochee Rockhounds, PO Box 5634, Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634 | our check for dues mac er at the club meeting. (5634, Spring Hill, FL 346' | de out to "Withlad Or mail the form a 11-5634 | coochee Rock- ind your check |

Rock Talk



Your Business Card Size Ad in Rock Talk

The cost to advertise your businesses in Rock Talk is \$10.00 per month.. Contact Mike Stone to set up an ad in both the club newsletter and our website. It will benefit both your business and our club.

Advertisers Needed

Please help us find advertisers for the *Rock Talk* and our website. The club can use the monthly income. Both the *Rock Talk* and our website have more exposure than only club members. Any club member who takes out a yearly ad, gets a **free club membership**.

Contact club treasure Janet Wheeler: ceeogirl@tampabay.rr.com
or send to:

Withlacoochee Rockhounds
PO Box 5634
Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

Withlacoochee Rockhounds PO Box 5634 Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Purpose

We are a non-profit organization whose purpose is to foster interest and promote knowledge of minerals, gems, fossils, lapidary arts, and earth sciences, through regular meetings, informative programs, workshops, and field trips. PLUS our annual gem and mineral and jewelry show. Membership is open to anyone sharing such interests.

Dues

Dues are \$25.00 annually for a family and \$15.00 annually for a single member

Club Meeting Location and Time

Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center, 3357 Susan Drive in Spring Hill. The meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM.

2018 Club Officers

| President | Judith Birx | 352-587-1702 | judithbirx@hotmail.com |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| Vice President | Kelly Johnson | 352-688-9399 | KellyMineralsFossils@aol.com |
| Secretary | Melodye Steverson | 352-683-9496 | melodye@designsbymelodye.com |
| Treasurer | Janet Wheeler | 727-938-3644 | ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com |
| Rock Talk Editors | Mike Stone / Peggy Burns | 603-524-0468 | n1ve@amsat.org |
| Club Web Master | | 603-524-0468 | |
| Mailing Reporter | | | |
| Gem Bag Coordinator | Gloria DuPont | 352-848-5199 | ddupont@tampabay.rr.com |

Board of Directors

Rovie Alford (2018)
Ralph Barber (past president)
Judith Birx (president)
Linda Spaulding (2020)

Melodye Steverson (secretary) Dorwin Skinner (2020) Mike Stone (2019) Janet Wheeler (treasurer)