

Rock Talk



March 2020



Rock Talk



March 11th Meeting Program

We didn't have details about the March 11th meeting program by the publishing deadline. As soon as information is received about the meeting program it will be posted on our website. www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

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- The February Club Meeting Photos
- February Vulcan Mine Dig and Photos
- Treasures in Gemstones
- Bench Tips
- What is It?

The Cover Photo

Contra Luz Opal from Opal Butte, Oregon. The colors are suspended inside by illuminating the back of the stone. With most opals the light has to fall on the front of the stone to see the play-of-fire.

The February Jewelry Class

by Roberta Oldread

Lauren Bell taught the February jewelry class. Lauren showed the class of ten students how to make cuff bracelets with cuff blanks and wire she supplied for a \$5.00 fee. First we had to bend each cuff blank to fit each individual, using a special tool Lauren brought. Then we chose a tumbled stone that was flat on one side, and then Superglued it to the cuff. We were then given a piece of 12-gauge copper wire to make swirls on the ends. Once the glue had completely dried and the stone was firmly attached to the cuff, Lauren showed us how to hold down one swirled end and wrap wire around stone and cuff, having the end lie flat on other side of the tumbled stone. Some participants were able to make several bracelets.

Lauren then showed the class how to make swirled wire cuffs, using the 12-gauge wire. Thank you Lauren for being an excellent teacher.



Lauren Bell instructing the February jewelry class.

Next Meeting, Wednesday, March 11 at 7:00 PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

February Jewelry Class Photos

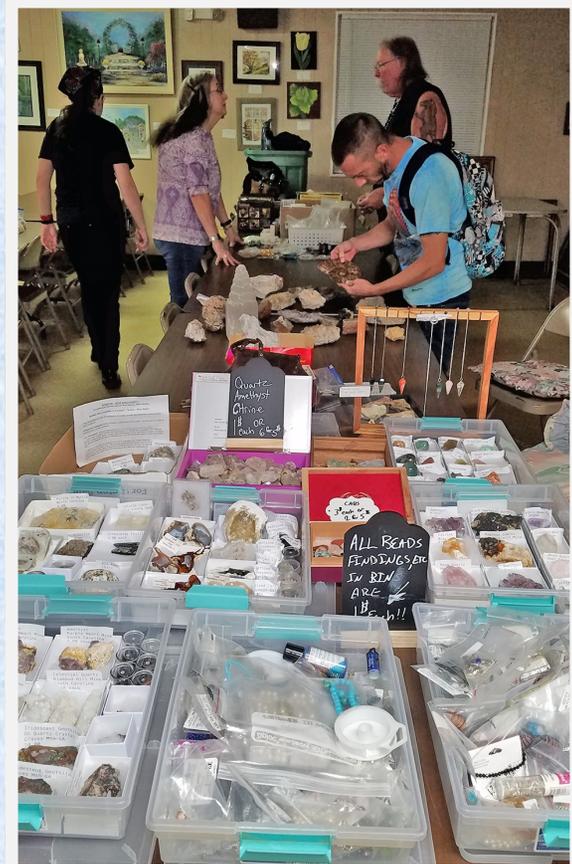
Photos by Roberta Oldread



Next Meeting, Wednesday March 11, 7:00PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

February Club Meeting Photos

Photos by Roberta Oldread



Tuesday Jewelry 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

Next Workshop

March 3rd at 9:00 AM—12:00 PM

The lesson for the March 3rd jewelry class will be wire wrapping 101 taught by Lauren Bell. Bring your jewelry tools and wire. If you don't have them, the club has both the tools and wire. There is no charge for this class except for the \$1.00 fee for use of the clubhouse.

Dues are Overdue

The club year runs from January 1st to January 1st, so it's time to sign up for the next club year. Janet, our treasurer, will be accepting membership forms and payments at the club meetings, or you can send the form and your check to:

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

Vulcan Mine Field Trips

The Vulcan mine in Brooksville is open for rock, mineral, and fossil clubs on the second Saturday of each month. Everyone is to be at the gate before 9:00 AM. Please make sure that you park off to the side of the road because of trucks entering and leaving the property. First we will go into the mine for a brief safety meeting. Then we have three hours to dig and collect specimens, or you can stay the full five hours. You can leave the mine either at noon or at 2:00 p.m. No one can leave the property before these times unless it's an emergency as a mine employee must escort us into and out of the mine.

Even during the winter months the temperature in the mine can reach 80 plus degrees with high humidity, so bring water, a hat, and sunscreen (also shade if you think you'll need it, because there is none in the mine). Sturdy shoes are helpful, also a rock hammer, chisel, eye protection, a bucket or another suitable container, and newspaper to wrap delicate specimens.

No bathroom, no water, no shade, please be prepared and dress accordingly.

Children are welcome with proper adult supervision. This is a retired limestone pit. There are sharp rocks, wild animals, insects, and other hazards to be mindful of.

Vulcan Mine Address

16313 Ponce DeLeon Blvd.
Brooksville, FL 34641
Lat./long. 28.656481, -82.457544



RALPH BARBER

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bottle wind chimes

Hernando County Farmers Market
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Spring Hill FL
352 200 6852
barbersbloomers@hotmail.com

Rock Art



Welcome New Member

Welcome new Withlacoochee Rockhounds club member: **Randy Blades**, Spring Hill

February Vulcan Mine Dig

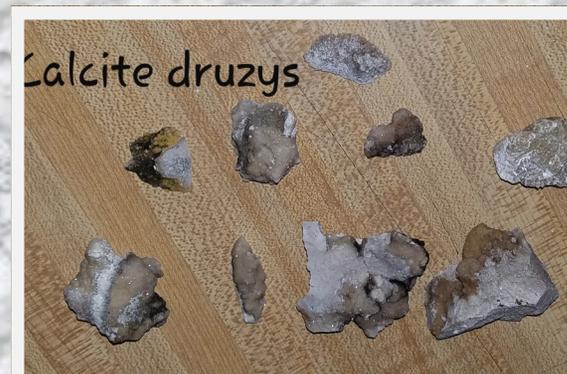
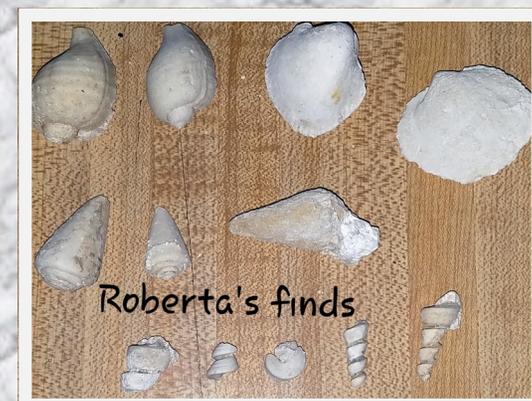
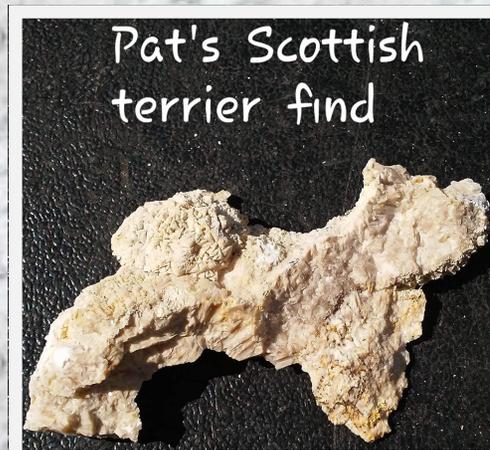
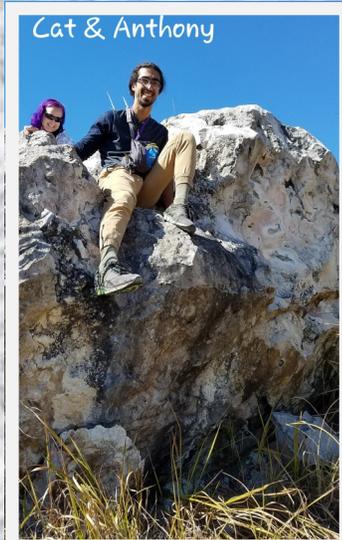
by Roberta Oldread

It was a chilly start, at forty degrees, when we arrived at the Vulcan Mine, but it warmed to the low seventies during the day. Seven of our club members participated along with several members of other clubs in the area. Many nice specimens were collected by each club member. Pat Gould found one shaped like a Scottish terrier. The following Withlacoochee Rockhounds participated in the Vulcan Mine field trip: Scarlet, Wyatt, and Stephanie Fyock, Pat Gould, Anthony Muffatone, Roberta Oldread, Catalina Veldes.

Photos on next page

Vulcan Mine Field Trip Photos

Photos by Roberta Oldread



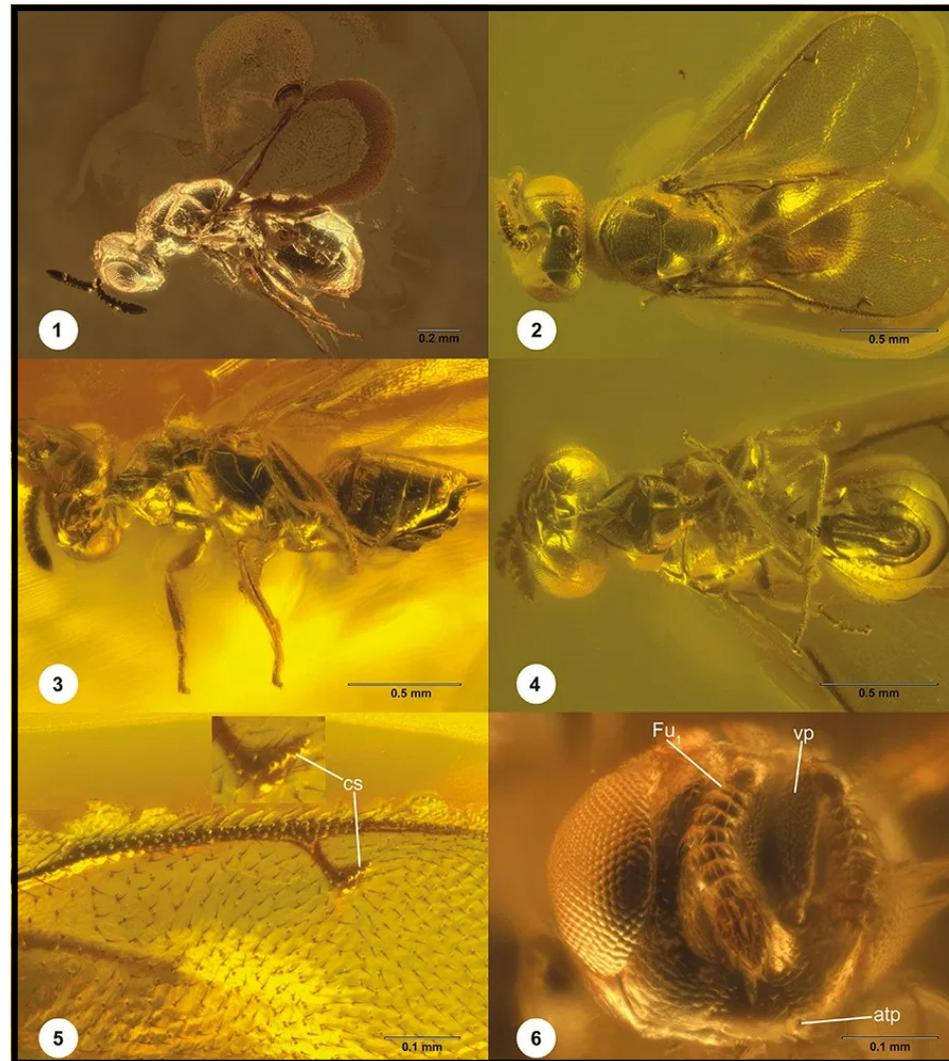
Treasures in Gemstones: Previously Unknown Wasps Found in Prehistoric Amber

From an article by Leslie Mertz, Ph.D., <https://entomologytoday.org/>

Most of the mined amber in the world winds up as gemstones in earrings and necklaces, but sometimes it has a greater purpose: It makes its way to entomologists who find beautifully preserved prehistoric insects inside. A case in point is the new report of never-before-seen wasps found in Baltic amber dating back at least 40 million years.

The wasps were discovered going through 600 amber samples at Germany Stuttgart State Museum of Natural History. The amber is fossilized tree sap, dating back to the Eocene epoch (about 34 to 55 million years ago).

Even though the insects were just 2-3 millimeters (mm) long and encased in rock-hard sap, one was spotted that had the distinctive features of wasps in the subfamily Chrysolampinae, which was unusual because no members of that subfamily had ever been identified from the fossil record. With a closer examination, four specimens were ultimately found that had Chrysolampinae's telltale features, including the shape of the forewing veins, antennal segments, and clypeus (a face sclerite or (face plate) just above the mouth).



Wasp specimens discovered in amber dating from 34-55 million years ago wasp turned out to be a new species in the chalcid wasp subfamily Chrysolampinae, which University of California, Riverside, researcher Roger Burks named *Brachyelatus marthae* after his mother Martha Shadle. These image shows different views of the 2 millimeter-long wasp, including its distinguishing features, such as details in the forewing (5) and antennae (6). (Photos by Roger Burks, originally published in Burks et al 2019, *Insect Systematics and Diversity*)

Chrysolampine wasps are an especially interesting group of insects, because they have an unusual life history. The Chrysolampine wasps are parasitoids, a way of life common to many wasps and other insects. In a typical parasitoid, including most members of the Chalcidoidea superfamily, the female lays her eggs on or in a caterpillar or other host organism, and, when the eggs hatch, the larvae start eating the host, eventually killing it. The Chrysolampines do things differently. Instead of laying the eggs in or on the host, the female lays them on a plant vaguely near the host. When the eggs hatch, the tiny newborn larvae (called first instars) have to set out to find a host themselves, a formidable task considering that the first instars are only about 0.2 mm long, and they have a very soft body that could easily dry out or be snapped up by any number of predators.

Despite the high mortality rate that likely accompanies that lifestyle, no member of the subfamily has ever evolved away from it; it is counterintuitive, there still successful. This suggests that there is a very interesting local optimum happening here in the evolution of this lineage, and it is unusual this has been happening for 40 million years.

Submitted by Michael Steverson

Arrive Early for Our Meetings

On the nights of our club meetings (second Wednesday of the month) the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center is open at 5:30 PM. The rock grinding and cutting machines are set up early so members can use the equipment before the business portion of the meeting begins at 7:00 PM. If you have jewelry, rocks, minerals, fossils or equipment to show or sell, specimens to be identified; the best time to do so is between 5:30 PM and 7:00 PM. No equipment can be used during the business meeting or during presentations.



Hernando County, FL

For Sale Items

Club members can post appropriate club-related type **for sale** items in the *Rock Talk* free of charge. Contact your editors by the 25th of the month to have your items posted in the next issue.

Mike Stone n1ve@amsat.org

Scott Metal Art and Lapidary
Unique Artisan Jewelry
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Bennett Scott

678-642-7953
bscott@scottmetalart.com



Use Our Website

I try to send an email to all members, with a link to the *Rock Talk* before the jewelry workshop, which normally is a week and a day before the club meeting.

If you don't receive an email with a link to the *Rock Talk*, you can access our website for the newsletter, club meeting program, and the project for the next Tuesday morning jewelry workshop.

Also, previous *Rock Talk* newsletters can be downloaded from our website. They have been posted from June 2016.

www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Mike Stone, editor/webmaster

Lauren M Bell
 Artist/Owner
[Facebook.com/MadHouseMindWorks](https://www.facebook.com/MadHouseMindWorks)
www.MadHouseMindWorks.etsy.com

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Jewels by Jude

Judith Birx
 Member of Withlacoochee Rockhounds
Judithbirx@hotmail.com
 Natural Stone Jewelry , Wire Wrapping ,
 Crystals , Beading

352-587-1702



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KELLY JOHNSON

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...Yes I buy collections, lapidary equipment, etc...

email: KellyMineralsFossils@aol.com

facebook: Kelly minerals fossils
 239-940-9773 SPRING HILL, FL



Withlacoochee Rockhounds



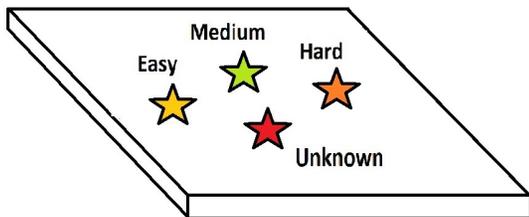
Bench Tips
by
Brad Smith



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

Identify Unmarked Solders

There are plenty of ways to mark your sheet or wire solders, but suppose you forgot to mark them and have a couple that you can't identify. The answer is to compare the melting temperature of the unknowns with that of a known solder. What I do is take a thick scrap of copper or nickel and arrange several solders on it. Ideally, I would have a sample of easy, medium, and hard known solders surrounding the unknown solder. Then I heat the plate from the bottom and watch the order in which the solders melt.



Inexpensive Electric Wax Pen

You can make your own wax pen from a small soldering iron

plugged into a light dimmer switch for heat control. Both components are easily found at a big hardware store or at Harbor Freight. As an example of the components, see items # 43060 and #47887.

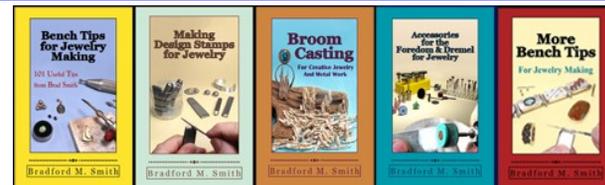
File the tip of the soldering iron into the shape you prefer or even better get a soldering iron with replaceable tips. Then you can make several tip shapes for different tasks. Set the dimmer control just hot enough to melt the wax without producing any smoke.

A tip design that I find ideal for some work is a length of small gauge wire that lets me reach in around the model to melt some for the wax. The wire is 18 gauge and about 15 mm long. I use Sterling wire to conduct heat easily to the tip, and I silver solder it into a hole on the end of a copper or brass rod that fits into the soldering iron.



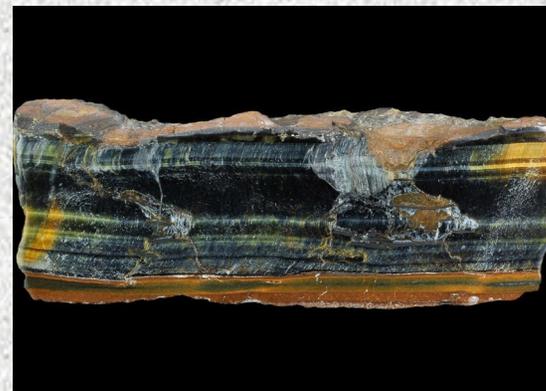
Dimmer control from Harbor Freight

Learn New Jewelry Skills With Brad's
How-To-Do-It Books
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



What is It?

Can you identify the specimen below?



Answer in this *Rock Talk*.

Last month's "What is It?"

Aragonite from Morocco



Board of Directors Meeting

The next Board meeting will be held at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center on **March 17th** at 6:30 PM.

Blue tiger eye

Next Meeting, March 11th, 7:00 PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

March Rock Talk

MR BEAR
Native American Style Jewelry
Necklaces 🐾 Chokers 🐾 Bracelets 🐾 Rings
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www.DesignsByMelodge.com

Your Favorite Specimen

We are always looking for something of interest for our club members. We're sure many club members have specimens in their collections that would be of interest to others in the club. If you would send us a digital photograph of your specimen we can publish it in the *Rock Talk*. A bit of information such as what it is, when, and where you found it would be great. If you don't have a digital camera, bring your specimen to a club meeting for others to see, and perhaps someone at the meeting could photograph it for the next issue of *Rock Talk*.

Rock Talk editors: Mike Stone and Peggy Burns
n1ve@amsat.org

Show Us Your Stuff

We're always looking for information for the *Rock Talk*. Club members would enjoy seeing other members' rock cutting and polishing equipment, display cabinets, projects, and favorite specimens. Take a photo and send it to your editors along with a description and we will be glad to include it in our newsletter.

Mike Stone
n1ve@amsat.org

CUSTOM LEATHER CREATIONS
&
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ROBERTA
352-302-2487 
bertahdhugger98@yahoo.com

Getting to Know You

Send us a few words about your interest(s) and/or hobby(s), whether or not they are related to rock hounding, we will print them in future issues of *Rock Talk*, and you might find that other club members have similar interests.

Club Members' Business Cards

Club members who have businesses related to any of our club activities can have the images of their business cards posted in each issue of the *Rock Talk*. This is an additional benefit of being a **Withlacoochee Rockhounds** member. You can send electronic images or an actual business card to:

n1ve@amsat.org
or
Mike Stone
4504 Kingston Dr.
Hernando Beach, FL 34607

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Facebook: Dr.GotRox Email: dr.gotrox@gmail.com

**Withlacoochee Rockhounds
is now on Facebook**
https://www.facebook.com/withlacoocheerockhounds1/?ref=page_internal


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

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Membership Form

Annual Dues: Individual member, \$20. 00. Under 18 years of age, no charge.
Check if new member

Please Print Clearly

Last name _____ First Name _____ Check if under 18

Street Address: _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone Number (s) _____

Email address: _____

**Give this completed form along with your check for dues made out to
"Withlacoochee Rockhounds" to club secretary Janet Wheeler at a
club meeting. Or mail the form and your check to:**

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

Rock Talk

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Our monthly club meeting is held at the
Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Club,
3357 Susan Dr., Spring Hill, FL 34606, on
the 2nd Wednesday of each month
from 7:00 to 9:00 PM



www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Your Business Card Size Ad in Rock Talk

The cost for non-club members to advertise their 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

Contact club treasure Janet Wheeler: ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com
or send to:
Withlacoochee Rockhounds
PO Box 5634
Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

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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 \$20.00 annually for adults and no cost for children under 18 years of age.

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.

2020 Club Officers and Appointees

President.....	Judith Birx.....	352-587-1702.....	judithbirx@hotmail.com
Vice President.....	Mark Moore.....	352-586-9607.....	markles@bellsouth.net
Secretary.....	Melody 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.....	Mike Stone.....	603-524-0468.....	n1ve@amsat.org
Mailing Reporter.....	Janet Wheeler.....	727-938-3644.....	ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com
Gem Bag Coordinator.....	Gloria DuPont.....	352-848-5199.....	ddupont@tampabay.rr.com
Audio/Visual Coordinator.....	Michael Steverson.....	407-376-5570.....	highlander56@gmail.com

Board of Directors

Ralph Barber (past president)
Judith Birx (president)
Roberta Oldread (2020)
Melody Steverson (secretary)

Ginny Steverson (2021)
Mike Stone (2021)
Lynn Walters (2021)
Janet Wheeler (treasurer)

Withlacoochee Rockhounds
Monthly Meeting Minutes
2-12-2020

The meeting was called to order by club president Judith Birx at 7:00 PM.

- We all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silent prayer.
- There were no new members to recognize.
- There were four guests in attendance; Randy and Linda Blades, and Colleen and Gary Stellmack.
- Mark Moore made a motion to accept the minutes of our January meeting as printed in the newsletter, seconded by Dave Letasi. Passed by all members.
- Club treasurer Janet Wheeler gave the Treasurer's Report.

New Business

President Judith Birx announced;

- Club dues for 2020 are past due and need to be paid. Our club has paid \$500 to the Senior Center, which covers the increase required for 100 club members for 2020. This means our club dues are not increasing for this year. Plus, VP Mark Moore has donated \$100 to cover the cost of any child's dues for 2020. This is to help out families with their overall renewal cost. She also stated that our club is a large part of the Senior Center family and we should all avail ourselves of all the center has to offer. She encouraged members to visit other clubs meeting there and see if they are something members would like to join.
- The applications for the William Holland School must be turned in by, or at the March meeting.
- Club president Birx then named, and drafted, members for the Gem Show Committee.
- Field Trip report – Roberta Oldread – The trip to the Vulcan mine was a success. Seven members participated and found lots of fossils. She is in negotiations with the Cemex owners to allow our group access to another one of their mines, the Brooksville Quarry. At this location, scheduled visits will be between Monday and Friday. Hard hats, safety glasses, and steel toed boots must be worn. Interested parties should talk to Roberta regarding which day of the week is best for them to attend. Member John Fusco, who has been to this mine with the Tampa Bay Club, said the fossils are the same age as the ones in the Vulcan mine, but there are many more and in better condition.
- Lauren Bell stated that Graves Mountain Mine, Diamond Hill Mine and Jackson Crossroads Mine are all having digs in the next few months. Contact Lauren for details.
- Club president Birx announced the next jewelry class will be on March 3rd, 9-12, with Lauren Bell. She will be teaching “Wire wrapping 101”. Bring your own supplies and tools. If you don't have supplies and tools, they will be provided them for you.
- Next month's refreshments will be provided by Dorwin Skinner, Lauren Bell, and Bear.
- Dave Letasi made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mark Moore seconded, passed by all.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Secretary Melodye Steverson.