



Rock Talk



May 8th Meeting Program

Alan Pagels from the Vulcan Mine in Brooksville will be the presenter at our May meeting. Alan has worked for the mine for many years. He has experience collecting fossils and has some

of the best specimens found in the area.

We will also have the 50/50, door prizes, snacks, and beverages.

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- What is It?

The Cover Photo

Blue fire agate. The stone is used for making jewelry. According to healing power of crystals believers, "Its energy resonates within the throat chakra, bringing a lovely sense of tranquility, as it alleviates anger and nervous tension."

The Meeting as I Saw it



Dorwin Skinner



You can always tell when it is going to be a good meeting by the number of cars in the parking lot. And a good one it was. The early birds get the worm or in this case the best parking spots. Today's meeting was supposed to be a trade session for club members. When I entered the building it seemed like everyone had brought specimens, as the tables were covered. Well, I knew my priority and I headed for the snack area. I may not have gotten the best parking space but I was going to get a good snack before they were gone. As I looked over the offerings I saw a chocolate Bundt cake that had my name on it. Having satisfied my sweet tooth I headed out to the tables and started looking at the available specimens. Michael Gridwood had a exceptionally large piece of Labradorite that took my eye and Ralph had a nice piece of Pinolith, a mineral I was unfamiliar with. I looked back at the raffle table and it

was filling up with more offerings. I purchased my raffle tickets and just maybe I would win one. All too soon Judith called the meeting to order and it was down to business for a short period of time. When it was raffle time I pulled out my tickets and listened closely to the numbers. I must have bought last month's tickets because she didn't call any of my numbers, she wasn't even close. A few short minutes later the best part of the meeting started...socializing. After what seemed like only a few minutes it was time to leave. I can't wait to see what next month brings.



Dennis Brown at the Pixie machine

Photos on next page



Daryl Johns and Steve Longenecker



Sign up and pay up at the entrance table



Bear and his wampum



Cut and polished by Roger Wheeler









A busy meeting.







Joe Gagliano and his Peace River fossils



Rovie's bead drill



Close up of the drilling end

Next Meeting, Wednesday May 8th, 7:00PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

photos by Dorwin Skinner and Mike Stone



Judith starts the meeting



Lauren Bell wheeling and dealing



Steve and Cheryl Longenecker checking out Roberta's jewelry



Jim, Mike, and Pat checking out Mike's specimens.



Creations by Michelle Evans



Rovie's automatic drill. The chuck moves up and down automatically as the bit turns.



Melody examines a rock



Jim Gugliotti and his locally found specimens



Mark Moore takes a close look.

April Jewelry Class Photos



Hand tweaking the bracelet



Last minute adjustments



Copper wire jewelry



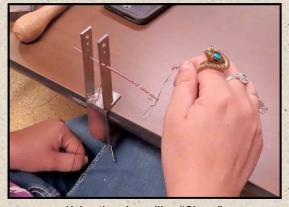
The Atlantic weave bracelet workshop group



Atlantic weave bracelet



Copper bracelet



Using the wire coiling "Gizmo"



Bending heavy copper wire with wire forming pliers



Rings previously made by Lauren Bell



From the VP Mark Moore

Micro Mounting

If one wishes to look at caverns filled with spectacular fiery crystals they might travel to Mexico, South America, Virginia, or one of the many places around the globe where such caves are found. Caves may be found in mountains, in deserts, in woodlands, or even underwater. On the other hand, with a limited budget or physical limitations on travel (not to mention climbing around in caves or quarries) one might choose to use a low power microscope to look down into a multitude of very small crystal lined caverns or just some of the many mineral crystal fields found on the surface of many common rocks that cannot seen with the naked eye. Having done the first in our younger days, we chose to investigate the latter.

Les and I were invited to attend the annual winter meeting of the Southeastern Micro-Mounters. The group makes a study of micro-crystals and minerals both lining tiny holes or caverns as well as on the surface of base rock structures. After a several hour drive to Dowling Park, a small retirement center on the outskirts of Live Oak, Florida, we arrived a bit tired but looking forward to a new adventure. Nowadays a three -hour drive includes several pit stops. The female logic never ceases to amaze me; we're on the road, we stop, the potty is used, on the way out another 32 oz. drink is purchased, in the next 20 minutes the drink is consumed, another 20 minutes then another emergency stop is ordered, on the way out another drink is purchased and so on down the road. In all my years of scientific study it's the best example of solid predictable cyclic action (even more steady than the earth's solar cycle) I've ever seen. Oh well.

After arriving, the female half of the team's first stop was of course the bathroom. Then after climbing a set of stairs and passing through a heavy entrance door we found ourselves entering a darkened meeting room with folks sitting around long tables peering into a variety of low power microscopes. Some had cameras attached and some did not, but all had small directed lights aimed toward the microscope stage on which set small rock or mineral samples. They were looking at and studying various micro mineral crystal forms that were brought by the different attendees to share among the group or in our case visitors. There was plenty to see, and all of the folks were happy to share both information and samples with us. This was great because in an upcoming student educational program we needed several "micro" specimens to work with.



A micromounter setting up his microscope to study a small crystal specimen.



Microscope with twin directed lamps to give even light across the selected specimen.

There were small piles of a variety of generally small rocks on tables near each investigator. There were several tables with only boxes, bags, and egg crates full of small rock samples from many locations around the country. There were also larger containers each with a multitude of rock or mineral samples some large but

most small. All of the rock containers were carefully labeled as to source location such as county, state, and in many cases a mine or quarry name and the collector. Of interest to me was a set of samples from a quarry in Northern Virginia near the town of Leesburg, called Goose Creek Quarry. I was born and raised near there; this was my old stomping grounds. I didn't know that rocks with such specular microcrystals were found in the old quarry.

On the surface, most but not all material appeared to be just nondescript rocks. But when put under a low power microscope the viewer was opened up to majestic caverns, or rolling fields covered with specular crystals from one or several different minerals, each having its own identity and yet blending into a seemingly smooth, even, choreographed blend of crystal shapes and colors.

Many of the sample rock and minerals were too large to fit under the microscope lens. To solve this problem, a bench size rock cracker was provided by one of the participants. Since many of the samples were fist size, the cracker saw plenty of duty creating smaller size pieces that fit nicely on the microscope, and even smaller pieces that could be mounted in small plastic boxes that could be used for storage or opened and placed under the microscope without removing them from the storage/display box.

Fortunately for us, one of our own Withlacoochee Rockhounds members (Pat Gould) is also a member of the Micromounters, so we had some expert advice as well as being shown the "lay of the land." For one member of our team that meant the snack table which was



Pat Gould using his microscope to study a sample.

Continued on next page

Microimounting from previous page



Leslie Moore learning how to rotate and align her specimen to get full light coverage

well fortified with several forms of goodies. Being past lunch that same member decided that lunch was in order so followed by Pat and I she retired downstairs where a small restaurant served a real nice lunch.

Returning back to the investigation room while Les received some training in micromounting while I visited with a couple of the investigators, one of whom sold small clear plastic mounting boxes. Needing some for the school program we have upcoming, I purchased a flat of fifty. I will put some to good use mounting a few of the samples we were given at the meeting. I was also given several ideas about how to teach micromounting in our school programs.

Here we need to point out that the pictures here are taken with a 3.1-megapixel camera and the photographs are an order of magnitudes below quality as seen through the optical lens of my AmScope variable zoom microscope with which we view specimens. It is currently set to optically view 5X with a .7 to 4.5X zoom. Additionally, the Troup editor, which adjusts the image, is adjusted to fit what I perceive as a correct color image and it may not be best for others. A camera that can take that high quality and color correct photo cost thousands of dollars and requires an expert to use, which I am not.

First I cut a sample of pyrite several times until it was small enough to fit in one of the one-inch plastic boxes, I then mounted it using a mounting mastic trying to center it as best as possible. The first photo was taken with a cell phone camera. Remember the box is one inch for reference. I then put the entire box under

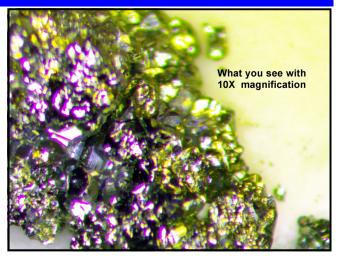
a microscope, and took the second photo with about a 2x magnification. The third photo is the same sample with about 10X magnification



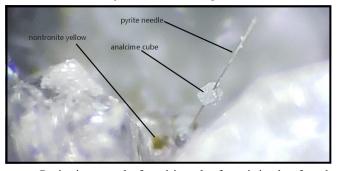
Taken with a cell phone camera. The small black box is one inch on a side. The specimen is a small one quarter inch piece of Pyrite



Same box with a little magnification



Same Pyrite with a 10X magnification



Pyrite is not only found in cube form it is also found as a needles. In the photo a Pyrite needle, filiform pyrite, (look it up) is found in Pat's collection with an analcime cube (hydrated sodium aluminum silicate) attached and a nontronite (a yellow iron based clay) glob (yep, I said glob) in the matrix below the needle.

Micromounting is not only good for minerals it is also very good for looking at micro or just plain small fossils. Here is a snaggletooth shark tooth from the Chesapeake Bay near Calvert Cliffs. Then the same tooth as seen under a 5X lens. In the second picture broken enamel and tooth underlayment can be seen whereas in the first picture it is barely noticed.

Digging around in sand collected from the spoil bank shores of the Cross Florida Barge Canal can reveal many microfossils. The shores of a new channel cut in the 1960s, which moved the Withlacoochee River into a new path into the Gulf of Mexico we found a variety of small

Micromounting from previous page



Snaggletooth Shark tooth with enamel damage.



Same tooth with low power magnification where damage is clearly seen

fossils, many not much bigger than a grain of sand. To recover the fossils several buckets of sand from a likely looking area are collected. I would love to tell you exactly what a likely looking area looks like but unfortunately it requires a bit of psychic ability, which I don't have. Leslie seems to generally pick a prime spot so I go with her intuition. The sand is then gently washed and spread out in a large clean area (we use a four foot X eight foot sheet of plywood) and turned several times until the sand is dry. The sand is then put through

several sieves, progressively with smaller-size screen. As the material passes through each screen it is inspected for signs of fossils. We have found many fossils with a screen about the size of a flour sifter. We have found larger fossils and we have found smaller, but they all show spectacularly under a low power microscope. They, like the mineral specimens, are then mounted using a mounting mastic which will hold but not harm the speci-



Microfossils from Yankeetown's Withlacoochee River spoil banks. Black Bar is 1/16th inch.

Fun with Science Program at the Crystal River Mall

Members of the Withlacoochee Rockhounds are supporting and teaching a set of three programs this spring at the Crystal River Mall. Mark and Leslie Moore, Dave and Susie Letasi, and Pat and Sandi Gould



Classroom area in the mall.

are doing the programs on the second Saturday in April, May, and June.



Use the microscope.



Drawing the dinosaur.

In April, the first of three, one and a half hour programs was about dinosaurs and dinosaur fossils. It featured a slide show of some of the different types of both plant and meat-eating dinosaurs found in North America millions of years ago. This program was followed by the students and their parents using microscopes to look at fossilized dinosaur egg shells, skin, bones and poop.

Then to give everyone a feeling for the size of dinosaurs, a stylized, life-size, eight-foot dinosaur was drawn to scale with each participant drawing in a one or two foot square area. Once completed, with the help of a couple of

Mall class from previous page



adults, the final drawing was hung on display in the mall.

The students were surprised to find that the famous "Velociraptor" was really only the size of a chicken and were found in China. They also learned that the Dakotaraptor and the Utahraptor were found in western North America. The Utahraptor was the largest known raptor, but both were much larger than the Velociraptor, and if humans were around millions of years ago they would have been far more dangerous to us.

The May program will feature Microminerals. The June program will be fossils of midwestern Florida.

Arrive Early to Our Meetings

On the nights of our club meetings (second Wednesday of the month) the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center is open at 5:00 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, or specimens to be identified; the best time to do so is between 5:00 PM and 7:00 PM. No equipment can be used during the business meeting or during presentations.

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 Rock-

Next Workshop May 7th at 9:00 AM—12:00 PM

Basic Wire Wrapping

Lauren Ball and Judith Birx will be teaching basic wire wrapping techniques such as making loops, headpins, eye pins, clasps, and ear wires. Once the basic techniques have been learned, the group will be taught to wire wrap a cabochon to make a pendant. If you bring your own wire and cabochon, there is no charge for the class, other than the \$1.00 building usage fee. Otherwise the cost for the wire is \$3.00 plus the cost of a cabochon (\$3.00 to \$10.00).

If you choose to bring your own wire, you will need a piece of 18 to 20-gauge copper, 36-inches long. We have tool kits for wire wrapping that can be used by students.





A sticker spotted on a club member's vehicle.

Southeast Federation Rockhound Roundup May 17-19, 2019 Suwannee River Music Park 9379 County Rd. 132 Live Oak, FL 32060

https://www.musicliveshere.com/

The Southeast Federation is sponsoring a new event this year, which they hope will become an annual event. In an effort to promote interclub relations, they have contacted member clubs notifying them of the Rockhound Roundup.

Space is limited and time is short, so if members are interested, they suggest applying for a space quickly.

Vendor forms and information: http://www.amfed.org/sfms/_pdf/roundup% 20application.pdf

Anyone can go to the event to shop and visit, but only SFMS members can set up to swap and sell. The Roundup is designed as a benefit to SFMS club members to promote participation and socialization.

The only entrance fee (\$2.00) is for non-vendors to enter the park. There is no fee to shop at the Roundup and parking is free.

If you have questions contact Jerri at Jheerx6@aol.com

Withlacoochee Rockhounds



Bench Tips by Brad Smith



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

Sanding Disks

One of my favorite flexshaft tools that saves a lot of time is the snap-on sanding disk. I mainly use the medium and fine grit, but sometimes like the very fine grit that are sold for working with platinum.



Sanding disks

Ordinarily, you would think of placing the disk on the mandrel with the grit side facing away from your hand, but notice that you end up with your elbow up in the air. Instead, try flipping the disk so that the grit side is towards your hand. It's a much more comfortable position because the elbow is down near your side, and it lets you hold the work up close where I have a better view of what I am sanding.

I use these snap-on disks so frequently that I keep multiple mandrels with different grits already mounted in the bur stand. Some mandrels have the grit facing out and some facing in.

Easier Prong Setting

When setting stones in a prong mount, the tool is less likely to slip off the prong if you grind a groove into its face or rough up the face a bit



Grit side facing away from the operator.



Making slash texture with the sandpaper toward the operator.

with sandpaper. Some folks prefer a prong pusher for doing this and others like a set of pliers.

The easiest way to create a slot on the pusher is with a file, and the easiest way to create a slot on one jaw of your pliers is with a cutoff wheel. Then do a rough polish on the slot with a medium-grit, knife-edge silicone wheel.

Be More Productive With Brad's "How To" Books

Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith Happy hammering











Learn New Jewelry Skills With Brad's How-To-Do-It Books Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith

Board of Directors Meeting

The next Board meeting will be held at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center on May 21st at 6:30 PM.



Next Meeting, Wednesday May 8th, 7:00 PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

May Rock Talk



Join us for the 2019 SFMS Workshop at William Holland

June 9th - 14th, 2019





Please find all the information regarding classes, registration form and payment at our new website...

www.sfmsworkshops.org

For questions please contact

Kristine Robertson

kristine@kmarella.com

The Annual Withlacoochee Rockhounds Gem Show is Coming

Veterans Memorial Park 14333 Hicks Road Hudson, FL 34669 December 6, 7, and 8, 2019



Club member volunteers are needed for the 2019 gem show committee. Sign up at the May club meeting..





Offering:

Darryl Johns

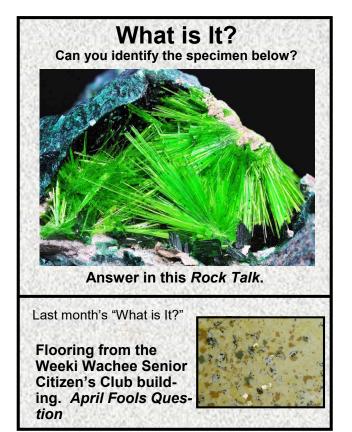
polished stones, specimens, slabs, jewelry, fossils, shells, rough stones, and more 5109 Harbinger Rd. Spring Hill, FL 34608 Text for Appointment (847) 420-8705

Facebook: Dr.GotRox

Email: dr.gotrox@gmail.com



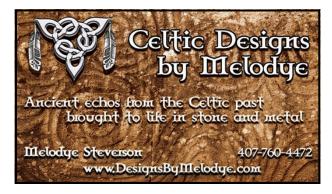
Meteorite found in Antarctica



Adamantine (by sublimation)

April Rock Talk





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 **Withlacochee 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

For Sale Items

Club members can post appropriate clubrelated 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

Vulcan Mine Field Trip

The mine is open for digging on the second Saturday of the month, weather permitting. Our next dig will be on **May 11th**. We meet at the gate to register at 8:30 AM. The address is:

Vulcan Materials Co.
16313 Ponce De Leon Blvd,
Brooksville, FL 34614
The Google Plus Code

(address shortcut): MG5R+6W

If you type the code into Google Maps it will direct you to

Important

the proper location.

The May dig at the Vulcan Mine will be the last dig until with weather starts to cool in September.

Welcome New Members

Welcome new Withlacoochee Rockhounds club member: **Joe Gagilano** from Brooksville.

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

Martian Hematite



These small mineral hematite-rich concretions are near Fram Crater on Mars, were photographed by NASA's Opportunity rover in April 2004. The area shown is 1.2 inches across. The view comes from the microscopic imager on Opportunity's robotic arm, with color information added from the rover's panoramic camera. These minerals suggest that Mars had a watery past.



Our Website www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Next Meeting, Wednesday April 10th 7:00 PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center



MINERALS*FOSSILS*CABOCHONS
FLINTKNAPPED STONE BLADE KNIVES

buy / sell / trade

retail / wholesale

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

email: KellyMineralsFossils@aol.com focebook: Kelly minerals fossils 239-940-9773 SPRING HILL, FL







From the Editor

Rock Talk

Peg and I will be spending the summer in Kentucky, so we will need help with the *Rock Talk*. We would appreciate receiving photos of happenings at club meetings, field trips, museum visits, etc. Please set your cameras or cell phones to the highest resolution and send the unedited photos to:

mstone36@tampabay.rr.com

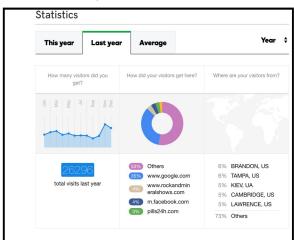
Please send no more than three photos per email. Articles from members are always appreciated. Don't be concerned with grammar, punctuation, etc., we will edit all articles.

www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Check out our website for photos, activity schedules, gem show fliers, past *Rock Talk* issues, and more. If you find problems or errors, or have suggestions for the website please let me know.

Below are the statistics for visits to our website for 2018.

Mike Stone, editor



Getting to Know You

It might be interesting to fellow club members to learn about other members' hobbies. If you would jot down a few words telling us about your other interests, whether or not they are related to rock hounding we will print them in future issues of Rock Talk

Withlacoochee Rockhounds as of April 10, 2019 has 100 members.

Rock Art



Next Meeting, Wednesday May 8th, 7:00 PM at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center

Withlacoochee Rockhounds Membership Form
Annual Dues: Individual member, \$20. 00. Under 18 years of age, \$5.00.
Please Print Clearly Last name Eirst Name 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
2019

Rock Talk



Dracidant

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: ceecgir@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 \$20.00 annually for adults and \$5.00 annually 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.

2019 Club Officers and Appointees

riesident	Juditii Diix	352-58/-1/02	judithbirx@hotmail.com
Vice President	Mark Moore		markles@bellsouth.net
Secretary	Melodye Steverson	352-683-9496	melodye@designsbymelodye.com
Treasurer	Janet Wheeler		ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com
Rock Talk Editors	Mike Stone / Peggy Burns	603-524-0468	
Club Web Master	Mike Stone	603-524-0468	n1ve@amsat.org
	Janet Wheeler	727-938-3644	ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com
Gem Bag Coordinator	Gloria DuPont	352-848-5199	ddunont@tampahay 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 (2019) Melodye Steverson (secretary)

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Ginny Steverson (2021) Mike Stone (2019) Lynn Walters (2021) Janet Wheeler (treasurer)