

Rock Talk

A close-up photograph of numerous yellow, crystalline mineral specimens, likely fluorite, set against a dark background. The crystals are of various sizes and shapes, some showing distinct cubic or prismatic forms. They are arranged in a somewhat layered or clustered pattern, with some larger, more prominent crystals in the foreground and smaller ones in the background. The lighting highlights the facets and edges of the crystals, giving them a bright, translucent appearance.

September/October 2020



Rock Talk



In This Issue

- Club President's Message
- From the VP
- Secretary's Report
- YouTube Channel
- From the Editor
- Pebble Pub Captured My Heart
- Scam Warning
- \$250K Gold Nuggets
- Grain Size Chart
- Himalayan Salt Lamps
- More Crinoids
- Rocking Near the River
- Rock Art...The Rock Light
- Rainbow Meteorite
- 442-carat Diamond
- Bucket Hunting
- Bench Tips

Cover Photo

Sulfur and Calcite crystals

President's Message

Judith Birx



Hi, everyone. I hope you are still in good health. This newsletter should bring you up-to-date on the recent happenings with our club.

The Board of Directors of the Withlacoochee Rockhounds has decided that there will be no October club meeting. We have also discussed and voted that there will not be a club jewelry class in October.

The Senior Center is open and some clubs are having meetings. There are classes available including one that I will be having on 13th of October, which is not associated with our club. If you want to know more about what the center has to offer, you can contact me or contact the center.

We have had two Zoom Board meetings and the virtual meeting format is working well. During the last meeting we discussed the possibility of having a gem show next year. We might try to have a small show in the early months of 2021. This is not a sure thing, but we are looking at it and watching the virus closely. Our club Board of Directors will be meeting again soon, and we will announce new developments.

I am also proud to announce that we are

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From the
VP

Mark Moore

Hey everyone, I hope the COVID has left all of you safe and well. Since we are restricting face-to-face club meetings and in an effort to help the Withlacoochee Rockhounds provide a source of information and a forum to exchange information and ask questions related to rocks, minerals, fossils, gemstones, and anything else that is rock related, one of our very computer literate members created a You Tube channel where some of us will start posting things of general interest. We need to get 100 subscribers. So how about helping us out and hitting the link below and becoming a subscriber to the channel? Actually, you may find some or even all of it interesting. For example, one of my first posts is going to be about a rock Tom W. a friend found on a beach in Delaware completely out of place. Pat G. is going to help me try to identify it once I get it in my hand. We'll post the results of the investigation once done on the channel. I'm sure we can talk Dave L. into providing a glance at the Spinosaurus jaw we are preparing for another dinosaur program and display at the Yankeetown school in the late fall. It would surely help us out and if you do drop a reply to me so I'll know you are still alive. As always,

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCypD_GIEEWc19R3TWjwd9tQ

The October Club Meeting Has Been Cancelled

President's Message from previous page

paying every current member's dues for the 2021 year. This cost will include the Senior Center dues and the Withlacoochee Rockhounds dues. That's right, you are reading this correctly; NO DUES FOR CURRENTLY PAID MEMBERS (2020) for year 2021. We hope that this picks up your spirits. I know how hard this has been for everyone, as I also have my own challenges.

I assigned several of our board members the task of contacting you with up-to-date club information and to visit with you via telephone. I received very positive feedback from them and from you, and I was very glad to hear how everyone is doing. If you were not contacted, it is possible that we do not have your up-to-date information. Please contact Mike Stone at 603-524-0468 or n1ve@amsat.org. Mike is the person who has the task of updating information pertaining to our club. He also does the *Rock Talk*, the club webpage (www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com), and sends out club related e-mails. I tell you this because during this time it is important that we stay in touch, therefore he needs to have your correct contact information.

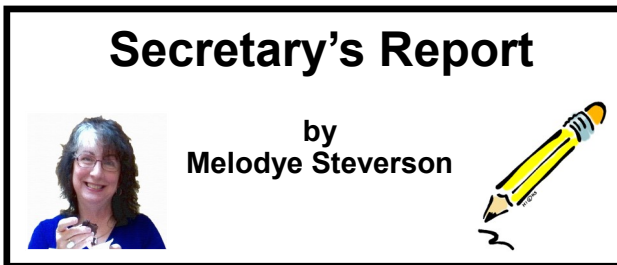
I hope that you have subscribed to our new YouTube Channel. We just put new videos on the channel by Mark Moore, and we want your videos as well. Our contact member and video editor is audio visual coordinator, Michael Steverson. You can submit your video to Michael Steverson at highlander56@gmail.com. Just make sure it is related to either rocks, gems, minerals, fossils, or of course jewelry. Also you want to be sure that you are using proper procedures

and techniques, and produce good footage to help out Michael. Contact Michael if you have any questions.

It feels like a lifetime since I've seen everyone, and I miss you all very much. I would like to take this moment to tell you that my thoughts and prayers are with everyone and their loved ones. God bless, and keep well.

Judith Birx

**President, Withlacoochee Rockhounds
352-587-1702**



**Withlacoochee Rockhounds
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
9-8-2020**

Attending Board members; Judith Birx, Mark Moore, Melodye Steverson, Janet Wheeler, Ralph Barber, Mike Stone, Roberta Oldread, and Lynn Walters. Also in attendance; member Michael Steverson.

Board meeting started at 6:37 pm and was held via the Internet on Zoom and over Speakerphone.

- Club president Judith Birx previously distributed the meeting agenda via Email.
- She welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining our first Zoom board meeting. We will have Zoom meetings until we are free to meet in person.

- Club president Birx announced that member Michael Steverson has created a YouTube channel for the club. It was discussed and determined that it would be used for education and instruction. It will offer classes, programs and club meetings. Members will be able to add their videos about rocks, minerals, fossils, making jewelry, field trips, etc. This channel will be available to all club members.
- Unfortunately, our 2020 gem show has been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Veteran's Park site where the gem show is held is closed until further notice.
- Having a "virtual show" was suggested. This was tabled until the next meeting.
- Planning fund raisers was on the agenda. Roberta Oldread suggested a one-day show near Brooksville.
- It will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Membership was next on the agenda. After explanation and input from all, the Board arrived at a decision that club members who paid dues for 2020 will not be charged dues or fees for 2021. This cost will be covered by club funds. All Board members agreed.
- Club president Birx asked Board members to contact all club members to pass along club news and to let them know the club is still going strong and will get back to real meetings ASAP. Most of the Board members agreed to call club members with this good news. The Board members that agreed to make calls were given a list by president Birx.
- Field trips were up next; Lynn Walters stated that the Vulcan Mine is closed due to COVID-19, and will be re-opening in September 2021. However, there is a slight chance that

Continued on next page

BOD minutes from previous page

club members MIGHT be able to get in sooner. Some sites in Georgia and South Carolina are open, contact Lauren Bell for info.

- At last report, Weeki Wachee Senior Center is closed until October.
- Elections are coming up in December. Details will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The meeting ended at 7:44pm.

Addendum

On 9/9/2020 (the day after the Board meeting) President Birx called each Board member to clarify exactly what the “No 2021 membership dues or fees will be charged for paid 2020 members” meant.

There was a bit of confusion on that point for a few directors. Club president Birx explained the situation to each Director in detail and all but two agreed. The change is passed. All club members who paid their dues for 2020, will NOT have to pay any dues to our rock club or to the Senior Center for 2021.

Also, during the same call, the Directors agreed to officially implement the new YouTube channel and voted in Michael Steverson as the creator and moderator of the channel.

These issues were voted on by phone and approved.

Respectfully submitted by club secretary Melodye Steverson

Withlacoochee Rockhounds Board of Directors Meeting Minutes 09-29-2020

The meeting was held over the Internet using a visual program called Zoom.

Attending Board members; Judith Birx,

Mark Moore, Melodye Steverson, Janet Wheeler, Ralph Barber, Mike Stone, Roberta Oldread, Lynn Walters, and Ginny Steverson.

The Board meeting started at 6:46 pm.

- Club president Judith Birx had previously distributed the meeting agenda via email.
- Board members had received a copy of the last Board meeting via email. Roberta Oldread made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, seconded by Lynn Walters, approved.
- President Birx asked the Board members who had contacted all club members to report on the reactions of the club members. She asked Mike Stone to email members and to publish in the newsletter, the changes the Board made at the last meeting. She also asked Roberta to publish them on her Facebook page.
- President Birx reported that she attended the meeting held at the Weeki Wachee Senior Center. She said it was a “meeting of the minds” as there was a representative from nearly every club in attendance. The meeting was held for the Center's Board to present information regarding the status of the building, and to have a Q&A after. The information from the meeting is as follows: the building is open. masks are optional, it will be thoroughly cleaned on Sundays and if a gathering is held there, you may clean before but you MUST clean after.
- President Birx then read the meaning of Phase 3 as pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic in Florida and how this affects our club meetings. This topic was discussed at length and resulted in President Birx making a motion, which called for a vote to determine if the club should have a month-

ly meeting in October. VP Moore seconded the vote, which was not approved. No monthly meeting in October.

- We will wait for official reports about the pandemic before deciding on having a meeting in November.
- President Birx said a suggestion had been made for having two “gem shows” in 2021. This was discussed and a motion was made by President Birx to investigate having a small show in January 2021, seconded by Lynn Walters, passed by all.
- Secretary Steverson read the disclaimer proposed for use on the Rockhounds new YouTube Channel site.
- President Birx made a motion to accept, VP Moore seconded, all approved.
- President Birx made a motion for a vote on whether the club sponsored jewelry classes should resume in October, seconded by VP Moore, Not approved. No club sponsored classes in October.
- The meeting ended at 8:04pm.

Respectfully submitted by club secretary Melodye Steverson

KELLY JOHNSON

MINERALS*FOSSILS*CABOCHONS
FLINTKNAPPED STONE BLADE KNIVES



buy / sell / trade

retail / wholesale

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

email: KellyMineralsFossils@aol.com

facebook: Kelly minerals fossils

239-940-9773 SPRING HILL, FL

We now have a YouTube channel for club videos

by Michael Steverson

Here is some information about the channel:

What is a YouTube Channel?

A YouTube channel is a piece of real estate on YouTube for a particular person or organization. Having a YouTube channel allows the club to have a central location for all of the organization's videos.

How does having the channel help the club?

YouTube is essentially the second biggest search engine, right behind Google. Having a presence on it gives us another way for people to find us. I have already included links to the club's site on the channel.

What sort of videos can be on the channel?

They should be relevant to the club's purpose. That is, nothing that would be of a political nature or anything like that. It should be something about what we do. If someone has a technique or something that they would like to display/teach, etc., then they can do a video about it and it might be uploaded. *To be clear, this is not a place to post things for sale. Any video of that nature will not be uploaded.*

I have been advised that I am the person who will upload the videos to the channel. I have been told that I am also the moderator of the channel.

If someone sends me a video and I deem it not pertinent to the club's purpose, it will not get uploaded. Nothing personal.

I have also been told that I can edit some of the videos, if need be, for inappropriate con-

tent.

But, to be clear, I will not be the video editor for everyone...I just do not have the time to do that.

How do we get videos uploaded to the channel?

I will be setting up a Drop Box or similar account for the club members to upload their videos to, so that I can download it and then upload it to YouTube. I will send out an email with that link shortly. There is not really a file size limitation for your video, but it should be noted that videos longer than ten minutes will most likely cause a viewer's eyes to gloss over. As the saying goes, "Brevity is the soul of wit". If a club member has a video that is clocking out at 30 minutes, I would suggest that they cut it down to three, ten minute videos, and have a part 1, 2 and 3.

What should I use to record my video?

If a member is recording a video that they want to have considered for upload, they should be sure to use a good camera, and good lighting. Please try to not record it on a phone, unless that phone has a very good camera. It should be a case of "Would I want to have everyone see this?" "Does it look good?" Be honest with yourself. The videos should have a little bit of polish to them. If the videographer is speaking, they should be clearly audible.

If you have any further questions, don't hesitate to contact me at:

highlander56@gmail.com



From the Editor

I am sorry that the *Rock Talk* has been delayed. Because of the coronavirus situation and its effect on our club functions, it was necessary to have two Board of Directors meetings, have members of the Board attend a Weeki Wachee Senior Center Board meeting, make phone calls to members, and also Board members discussed and voted about various changes by phone.

There is much information about the meetings and subsequent decisions in the articles, "From the President", "Secretary's Report", "From the VP", "and...YouTube Channel..." in this issue. If you read them all, you will understand that the club officers and Board members have been very busy.

Whether or not we will continue to have the usual form of club newsletter is up to you (club members). Since we aren't going to have a club meeting, a jewelry class, or other club activities, at least in October, without contributions from our members, there might not be much to write about until the coronavirus releases us from its grip. So I am imploring you to give us a hand. Send us information about what you've been doing; projects in which you've been involved, new specimens you've found or purchased, custom jewelry you've created, new displays you've created, etc.

We are looking forward to hearing from you so we can continue to provide a meaningful monthly newsletter.

Be careful out there and always be safe.

Mike Stone, editor

Pebble Pup Captured My Heart

by Roberta Oldread

Pebble Pups have always captured my heart when they show interest in rocks, minerals, fossils, and gem stones.

Meet Vanessa, who I found on a post in early July while I was on the Rockhounds Facebook page. I ran across an awesome collection posted by her Mom, Beth Jones. Beth had posted multiple photos of her daughter's collection.

Beth wrote that she wasn't a collector nor had she ever thought of a rock as anything more than a thing on the ground. But her daughter, Vanessa, has been fascinated by rocks since she was two. Vanessa is now almost nears old, and from joining rock groups, reading with her, and helping her collection, grow, Beth says, "We are gaining a ton of knowledge. I joined the group's to show her all the cool rocks and she loves seeing other collections and sharing hers".

"Here are photos Vanessa's current collection and some pictures of her with her rocks. We just re did her collection and she loves organizing and arranging her collection in her room".

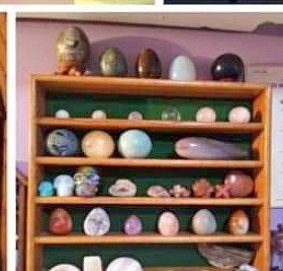
I was very impressed by Vanessa's collection and thought to myself, "This is one young lady who I would like to send special Florida specimens to add to her collection". I then commented to Beth's post, showing her a few pictures of my collection located throughout my home. Vanessa was very excited and really liked the piece of peacock ore and the labradorite slab that I have in my bathroom. In my living room there is a small shadow box filled with small specimens that she also liked. I sent a private message to Beth thanking her for sharing her daughter's collection, and men-

tioned to her that whenever I see kids showing interest in rock collecting it touches my heart. I explained to Beth that I belong to the Withlacoochee Rockhounds, in Florida, and that we have a gem show every year with a section dedicated to teaching children about rocks, minerals, and fossils. I told her that children are the future Rockhounds. Beth responded by saying that she would love that so much.

I told Vanessa that she had an awesome collection, and that I would put a small box of Florida specimens together that I had personally collected over the years, and send it to her to add to her collection. Vanessa thanked me and said, "I will really enjoy it". I mention to Vanessa I have been collecting since I was her age, but stopped for many years, and since the last seven years I've been adding to my collection that now spreads throughout my home and yard.

I put a box of Florida rocks together; calcite from the Vulcan Mine, Tampa Bay agatized coral, fossils, coral from the Million Souls Mine, and a sand dollar along with shark's teeth that I dug up in the Peace River. I labeled each specimen and placed them all in separate bags with tags, so Vanessa would know what she was getting as well as where they were found.

On July 31st, I messaged Beth to let her know that her package for her daughter was on



its way. Beth thanked me saying, "Vanessa is going to be so happy, and if it comes close to her birthday, I'll just let her open it with her other presents". I asked Beth when her birthday was and she responded. "September 8th", but we al-

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Pebble Pup from previous page

ways do her party in August since her birthday is so close to the start of school". Beth told me that she was getting Vanessa a pocket-sized microscope for her birthday so that she would be able to look at her crystals more closely. I had told her that was a great item too start her off with and her geology adventurer. I mentioned to Beth that there were a few guys in our club who have high-tech microscopes that they bring in and use. Though due to the Covid-19 we've not had a meeting since February and how much I had missed it.

On August 5th, I got a private message from Beth saying they received the box today! Included were many pictures a Vanessa showing off her new specimens that I sent to her and a small video. Vanessa loved everything especially the sand dollar and the red coral. They are her favorites. Vanessa also loves the baby sharks teeth. Beth indicated to me that they were adding sea creatures to their homeschooling, so maybe we can teach her and some of her friends about the fossils too and they can see these as examples and it would be very cool for her to show and tell them. Vanessa's mom also mentioned to me that there is a young boy in their neighborhood who also collects rocks and that they were going to get together during Zoom meetings so that they could talk rocks and share their collections together online. I said to Beth please tell her to never stop learning... there's so much to learn, and even at my age I'm still learning.

On August 7th, I messaged Beth and ask her if I had her permission to write this story and share a few of the pictures in our Withlacoochee Rockhounds, *Rock Talk* newsletter and to also share it on our Facebook page. Beth gave me permission to write this story and include the pictures of her daughter opening my box that I sent her.

I now have a new rock hound Pebble Pup pen pal that I will keep in touch with and watch her grow and learn about rock hounding. Rock on.



Scott Metal Art and Lapidary
Unique Artisan Jewelry
With a Southwestern Flair

Bennett Scott

678-642-7953
bscott@scottmetalart.com



Indonesian Sulfur Miners

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

Warning to Withlacoochee Rockhound Members

During the last several months, illicit requests have been sent to members of various clubs in the US, including the Withlacoochee Rockhounds, asking members to purchase gift cards that would be used as donations to various organizations. These are **SCAMS**.

Be advised that our club has **never** and will **never** ask members to buy gift cards or provide any form of monetary funds to anyone or any organization by phone call, email, or any other method of communication.

Use Our Website

If you don't receive an email with a link to the *Rock Talk*, you can access our website for the newsletter or up-to-date club information. Also, previous *Rock Talk* newsletters can be downloaded from our website. They have all been posted since June 2016.

www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Mike Stone, editor/webmaster



Hernando County, FL

Two gold nuggets worth \$250,000 found in Australia

From www.cnn.com

Gold diggers in southern Australia have found two huge nuggets worth \$350,000 AUD (\$250,000 USD). The pair of nuggets weigh in at a combined 3.5 kilograms (7.7 pounds) and were found on the same day near Tarnagulla in Victoria state.



The nuggets could fetch up to 30% more than their estimated value by weight if they are sold to a collector..

The pair had been waiting months for a permit that would allow them to start searching for gold in the area. They used an excavator to dig up dirt before using a metal detector to see if there is any gold to be found.

Gold has been continuously found in the region since 1851, but technology has become an essential aid for modern prospectors.

In the old days miners could only see or feel gold -- but now with detectors they can hear it.

Grain Size Chart

Millimeters	Wentworth Grade	Phi (Φ) Scale
>256	Boulder	-8
>64	Cobble	-6
>4	Pebble	-2
>2	Granule	-1
>1	Very coarse sand	0
>1/2	Coarse sand	1
>1/4	Medium sand	2
>1/8	Fine sand	3
>1/16	Very fine sand	4
>1/32	Coarse silt	5
>1/64	Medium silt	6
>1/128	Fine silt	7
>1/256	Very fine silt	8
<1/256	Clay	>8

Using the Grain Size Chart

If you want to specify grain size or particle size, which is based on the diameter of sediment, you can use the chart. For example, the photo below depicts measuring a small piece of limestone (8.77mm). According to the chart, the grain size is a **pebble**, because 8.77mm is greater than 4mm (<4) and less than 64mm.



Using a digital caliper to measure average grain size.

If you only have an SAE (English) measuring instrument or rule, multiply the English measurement by 25.4. For example, 1/8 inch equals .125 inch, times 25.4 equals 3.175mm. Of course the smaller particles cannot be measured with typical hand-held measuring instruments.

Himalayan Salt Lamps

Not long ago CNN published an article entitled, “Everything you need to know about buying Himalayan salt lamps”

From <https://www.cnn>



Himalayan salt lamps claim to make your home healthier by improving the air quality.

Pink colored salt crystals are native to areas close to the Himalayas, such as Pakistan. The salt is used in everything from cooking slabs for grilling to what is known as “salt therapy”. It is thought that pink salt releases negative ions.

“When an atom is attracted to another atom because it has an unequal number of electrons and protons, the atom is called an ION. If the atom has more electrons than protons, it is a negative ion, or ANION. If it has more protons than electrons, it is a positive ion”.

The pink salt in lamps is thought to release negative ions into your space, which would be able to get rid of dust particles that may affect your health, thus purifying your space and helping the air quality of your home. Because of that, many believe that it can do everything from increasing your energy levels

to alleviating symptoms of allergies. Some people say these pink salt lamps can even help boost your overall mood and help you sleep more soundly.



It is important to note that no major studies have supported the alleged health benefits of Himalayan salt lamps when it comes to air quality, but one study suggested that negative ions can help decrease depression.

Many feel that salt lamps can make a great addition to your home. The lamp emits a pinkish hue that makes the ambiance warm and relaxing. Different designs can fit the aesthetics of your home, including miniature versions that make ideal night lights.



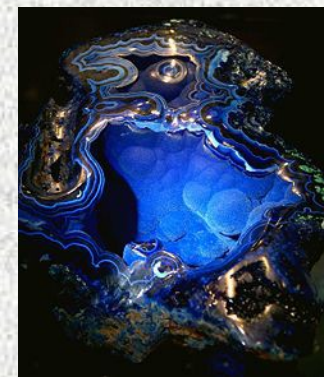
Whether you believe in the wellness benefits of salt lamps or not, they make for excellent functional home decor. Place a salt lamp

in your home office as a gentle, decorative desk lamp or reading light or use it as a beautiful piece of shelf decor. Put one in your kids' bedroom – kids and teenagers love their fantastic crystalline look.

Those of us living in humid climates might want to avoid leaving a salt lamp in a non-air conditioned space, because high levels of humidity will cause the salt to dissolve, and gravity will cause the liquid to drip and flow to the base of the lamp. editor

What is It?

Can you identify the specimen below?



Answer in this *Rock Talk*.

Last month's “What is It?”

Lipidolite



Sent to us by Michelle Evans

Azurite

More Crinoids

by Mike Stone

It was a cool start to the day at fifty-nine degrees, so we figured we would be able to search our favorite road cut for fossils in relative comfort during the afternoon. Wrong. The angle of the sun bearing down on us and the nearly vertical limestone wall along Route 313, just south of Fort Knox, KY was perfect for producing oven like temperatures and blisteringly bright light. But during our one hour of rock hounding we found several very nice crinoid specimens, a calcite pocket of crystals, and an interesting chert nodule that is similar, except in color, to those we found in England twenty-two years ago.

We collect in this area at least once a year and know exactly where to look and what to look for. Peg checked out the runoff gully where the road crews have been trying to manage erosion for over twenty-five years, looking for limestone plates containing crinoids. I worked further up the gully where individual crinoids are plentiful, because water washes them down from the ledge above. We had our hammers and chisels, but we didn't take them out of the truck, because of the easy pickins. What could be better than simply picking specimens off the ground? After about an hour, we were ready for a drink of water and a seat in the air conditioned vehicle.



Mike collecting along the eroded wall.



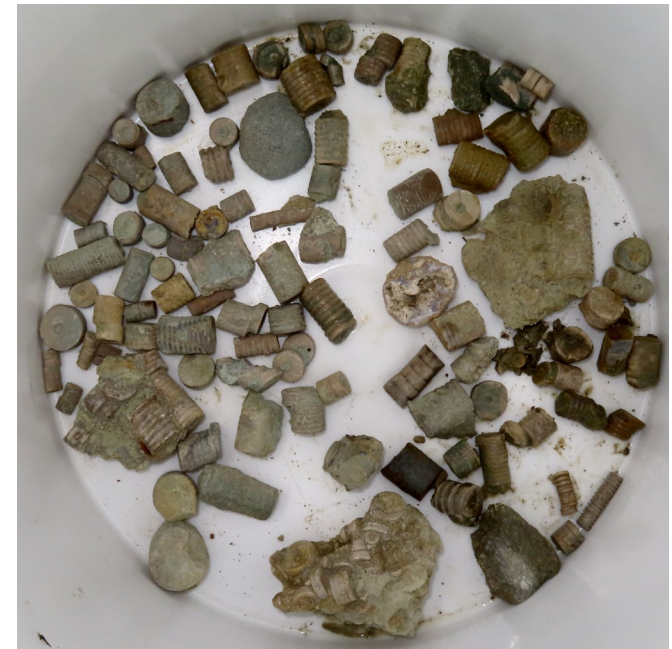
Peg with some of our finds.



Crinoid-filled plate before (left) and after (right) cleaning with a pressure washer.

Later when at home, we used the pressure washer to clean the largest specimens, exposing many more crinoids than we expected imbedded in the plates.

We first collected at the road cut about thirty years ago, and every year since we moved to Kentucky twelve years ago. We have several crinoid specimens on display in both our Florida and Kentucky homes...one weighs about twenty-five pounds. Yet we can't resist the urge to continue collecting. We are always looking for something better, and today we found some of the best yet.



Crinoids and other finds in the bottom of a five gallon bucket.



A couple of interesting finds.

Rocking Near the River

by Mike Stone

On a typically hot and humid day in mid August, Peg and I went to Brandenburg, KY, about twenty-two miles almost due north from our home, where the Ohio River is nearly four tenths of a mile wide. We parked overlooking the river, about thirty feet below us. Then we walked down what was once a steep boat access road to the water. But now the previously useable ramp is a rough, partially paved, and gullied incline, due to erosion. Over the years, rocks had been tightly packed on the steep river bank to retard erosion from both runoff from the higher elevation in town, and also from frequent flooding of the river, especially in the spring. Later rip rap was dumped and spread to further attempt to stabilize slope.



The old boat access ramp to the river. Peg is the tiny red speck near the center of the photo. Mud in the foreground was deposited when the river was at flood stage.

Naturally our eyes focused on the ground as we checked out the rip rap, most of which was dull gray colored limestone, with a few heavily sculptured water-worn pieces mixed in. We saw only one or two fossils in small pieces of limestone. Probably the most interesting rocks I saw were gray limestone chunks of rip rap containing nodules of flint. Peg found a strangely patterned rock and another full of rough depressions and

holes, probably due to erosion of softer material among the harder matrix.



Cobble size pieces of limestone with chert nodules. These were placed along the river bank to retard erosion.

Because the Ohio River floods often, many of the rocks on the sides of the river are coated with a layer of dried silt, masking colors, and textures, and other details. So we really didn't know what we were looking at. But at least we got out, moved around a bit, sweat profusely, and exercised our eyeballs.



Looking over the silt-covered rocks near the water in the still air and stifling heat.

Below: a huge barge passing under the bridge between Kentucky (left) and Indiana (right).



Rock Art

The Rock Light

can be used as a nightlight, mood light, or way to highlight your specimens. I made this light from a glittery metamorphic rock that I found in a brook in New Hampshire.



1. The first step in making a rock light is to secure the rock in a jig or vice with cushioning such as rubber or dense foam. Or it can be hand-held in a container filled with sand. Here's where an extra two hands come in handy. Using a hammer drill and masonry or SDS bit (or rock bit), drill a 1/4 inch hole through the rock.
2. Select the desired color LED. You can buy them on line. One hundred cost \$5.55. https://www.amazon.com/eBoot-Pieces-Emitting-Diodes-Assorted/dp/B06XPV4CSH/ref=sr_1_4?dchild=1&keywords=single+led&qid=1596745712&sr=8-4
3. Select an 1/8 watt resistor of 600 to 1,000 ohms. You can buy them on line. Twenty cost \$1.59 <https://www.ebay.com/itm/20pcs-1-8W-1-8-watt-5-CARBON-Film-Resistor-U-PICK-RESISTANCE-FAST-SHIPPING-USA/123082980296?hash=item1ca8513bc8:g~8AAOSwRyda1WmR&var=423503886344>

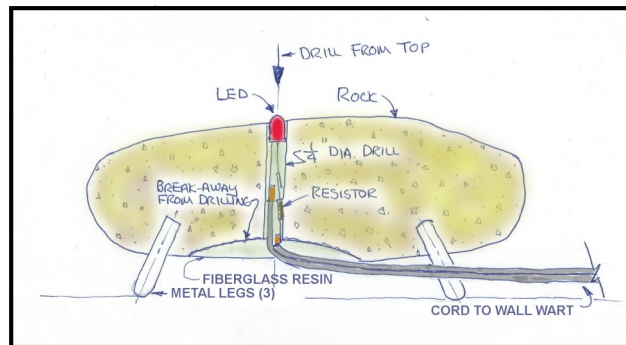


4. Solder the resistor to one of the leads on the LED.
5. Solder the leads from a 12-volt wall wart. If the wall wart produces DC current, you will need to solder the positive (+) wire to the positive (+) lead on the LED. The positive lead is normally the longer of the two leads. If the wall wart produces AC current, polarity (+ or -) is not necessary. If your wall wart produces more or less than 12-volts, you might need a different resistor.
6. Calculating the resistor value for an LED. <http://elecurls.tripod.com/drop-res.htm>

Voltage-Drop Resistor Calculator

Input Voltage	Output Voltage	Current Draw (AMPS)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text" value=".02"/>
<div style="background-color: #00FF00; width: 100px; height: 15px; display: inline-block;"></div> Required Dropping Resistor (Ohms)		
<div style="background-color: #00FF00; width: 100px; height: 15px; display: inline-block;"></div> Minimum Resistor Wattage		
<input type="button" value="Calculate"/> <input type="button" value="Reset"/> <input type="button" value="Sample"/>		

7. The input voltage is actually the output voltage on the wall wart (usually printed on the unit). Set the input voltage to 3-volts and the current draw to .02 amps, then click on calculate. The calculator will give you the value of the resistor, but you can vary the value by 100 ohms or more.



Cross section of the rock light.

8. After wiring, test the LED, resistor, and wall wart circuit by plugging the wall wart into a standard outlet.
9. **Optional:** I drilled the bottom of the rock for three legs made of 1/4 inch brass rod. If you error in drilling or cutting the rods, the rock will not wobble, because there are three legs. Think milk stool.
10. Glue the rods in the holes and let set.
11. Push the LED and resistor into the rock.
12. I covered the metal rods with shrink tubing, but you can use tape, liquid plastic, Goop, or you might find plastic or rubber caps that fit the rod.
13. Seal the LED by applying a small amount of "Goop" in top of the hole before pushing the LED and resistor and wire in the hole.
14. Pour two-part liquid resin in the hole and depression on the bottom of the rock. (Fiberglass resin is available at Walmart or auto parts stores – Bondo brand.) Be careful not to pour an excessive amount of resin because you don't want it to run down the side of the rock. It's almost impossible to remove.
15. Let the resin setup for an hour or so and your rock light is ready.

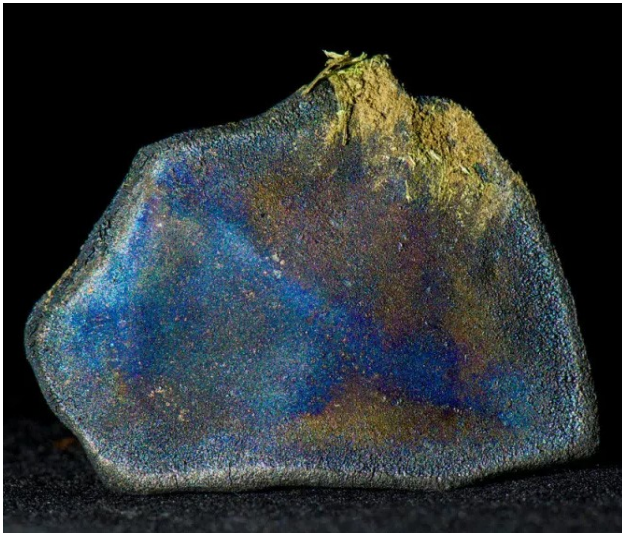
If you have questions about the procedure, you can contact me. When we are in Florida, I can help you put the rock light together at a club meeting or jewelry class.
Mike Stone



The bottom of the rock light showing the three metal legs covered with electrical shrink tubing, fiberglass resin sealing the LED, resistor, and electrical soldered connections, and the wall wart.

Rainbow meteorite discovered in Costa Rica may hold building blocks of life

from www.livescience.com/



A cross section of a small Aguas Zarcas fragment shows colorful clays that might include complex organic compounds.

A small, soft space rock smacked into Costa Rica on April 23, 2019. And it may have carried building blocks for life.

The washing machine-sized clay fireball broke up before hitting the ground. Locals found shards scattered between two villages, La Palmera and Aguas Zarcas. And while meteorites turn up all over Earth, these shards were special; the asteroid that spawned them was a soft remnant of the early solar system, made from the dust from the spinning nebula that would ultimately form our solar system, formed in even older stars. And the meteorites that rained down from the event — collectively called Aguas Zarcas — belong to a rare class called carbonaceous chondrites, which

form in the wee hours of the solar system's emergence and are typically packed with carbon. This particular space rock contains complex carbon compounds, likely including amino acids (which join to form proteins and DNA) and perhaps other, even more complex building blocks of life.

While other rocky chunks from the very early solar system became parts of planets, this one remained intact and changed over time only through sunlight-driven chemical reactions that spurred the creation of more and more complex chemical compounds.

An earlier meteor that exploded over Murchison, Australia, in 1969 had similar features. Amino acids discovered in its clay. This helped spread the idea that life on Earth may have originated from chemicals delivered in meteorites. And like the Murchison meteorite, this Aguas Zarcas fragment contains dust from the ancient, earlier Milky Way, before our sun formed.

Studies of this new meteorite are still incomplete, Sokol wrote. But researchers are excited that they can examine it using modern techniques, looking for complex organic compounds — maybe even proteins — that even if they did once exist inside the Murchison meteorite have long since disappeared, degrading in Earth's atmosphere. (The Murchison meteorite very closely resembled Aguas Zarcas, and if Aguas Zarcas contained proteins then Murchison probably did as well, though the opportunity to detect them has been lost.) Already, there's evidence of amino acids in this Aguas Zarcas fragment not found elsewhere on Earth.

Aguas Zarcas shards may offer the most pristine samples yet of the early solar system and pre-solar dust cloud. But landing as they

did in the Costa Rican rainforest, Sokol reported, there's still the possibility of contamination.

Down the road, even more pristine samples may become available. The Japanese Hayabusa2 probe, launched in 2014 with the goal of sampling the asteroid, Ryugu, is already on its way back with Ryugu dust onboard, a sample that may contain carbonaceous chondrite, Sokol noted. And in 2023, NASA will return its own samples from a similar asteroid, Bennu, which Sokol reported is likely related to Aguas Zarcas.

"These asteroid scraps will be truly pristine, having never touched the atmosphere or sat atop rainforest soil," Sokol wrote.

But for now, Aguas Zarcas is the best source of spacefaring carbon compounds available.

Jewels by Jude

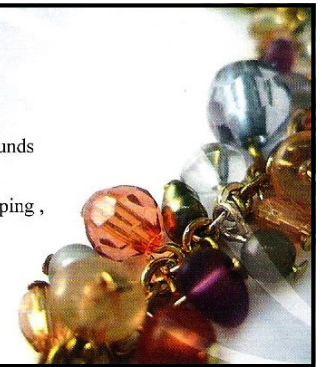
Judith Birx

Member of Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Judithbirx@hotmail.com

Natural Stone Jewelry, Wire Wrapping,
Crystals, Beading

352-587-1702



RALPH BARBER

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bottle wind chimes

Hernando County Farmers Market
US 19
Spring Hill Fl

352 200 6852

barbersbloomers@hotmail.com



The October Club Meeting Has Been Cancelled

Miner Finds 442-Carat Diamond That May Be Worth \$18 Million

from www.bloomberg.com/



442 carat diamond

A diamond miner who has dug some of the world's most valuable gems from a mountainous African kingdom has found another huge stone. An unearthed a 442-carat diamond was found in the Letseng Mine in Lesotho. It could sell for as much as 18 million dollars.

Given the rarity of such large stones, demand for big diamonds has traditionally been resilient, even at times when the wider industry has struggled.

The Letseng Mine is famous for the size and quality of the diamonds it produces and has the highest average selling price in the world. Two years ago a 910-carat stone, the size of two golf balls, sold for 40 million dollars.

The find comes as the global diamond in-



Lesotho

dustry has been brought to its knees by the pandemic. Jewelry stores have closed and India's cutting industry, which handles almost all of the world's stones, has come to a halt. The miners that dominate the industry have seen their rough diamond sales collapse.

The recovery of this remarkable 442 carat diamond, one of the world's largest gem quality diamonds to be recovered this year, is further confirmation of the caliber of the Letseng Mine and its ability to consistently produce large, high quality diamonds.

Sent to us by Michael Steverson

Lauren M Bell
Artist/Owner
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www.MadHouseMindWorks.etsy.com

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Bucket Hunting

by Dorwin Skinner

I have acquired most of my collection by bucket hunting. You might wonder what bucket hunting is. Well, when I went to the mines looking for specimens, one of the first things I noticed was that the best specimens were usually in someone else's bucket. Sometimes with a sad look or the offer of a few dollars that specimen could be mine. As I developed my skills as a bucket hunter, my collection has grown. With the addition of the Internet, I am able to look at buckets worldwide.

Not too long ago our club member friend, Dave Letasi, introduced me to Don Lambert. Don has a major collection of his own, and fossils are not his forte. Don has a amazing collection of artifacts and parts of wrecked airplanes. He has been all over the world adding to his collection. He is a diver and has found many pieces in their watery graves.

Occasionally he finds something else. This time Don had the jaw of a young tapir that he found in the Suwanee River. With a monetary exchange, it went from his bucket to mine. The jaw was in pieces but it was easily repaired. It is from a young tapir that was still growing new teeth. You can see an adult molar growing under a juvenile tooth.

The oldest known Tapir from the fossil record of Florida is a lower fossil tooth that was discovered from the Early Miocene Period in Hernando County, Florida. There are at the minimum, 6 extinct fossil species of Tapirus known to have lived in Florida. These are: Tapirus veroensis, Tapirus haysii, Tapirus lundeliusi, Tapirus webbi, Tapirus polkensis, and Tapirus

Continued on next page

The October Club Meeting has been Cancelled

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Bucket Hunting from previous page

simpsoni. Tapirs in Florida became extinct approximately 11,000 years ago. Source: *Fossil-Treasures-of-Florida*



Modern tapir

Bench Tips
by
Brad Smith



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

Raising a Cabochon

When a cabochon sits too low in a bezel, the bezel can hide a lot of the stone. The solution is to either sand down the bezel height or boost up the stone. But if you choose to raise it up, the question is what is the best material to use ?

I was taught to use fine sawdust but now think that might be a problem when used in rings. I reason that rings will frequently get wet, which would cause the sawdust to swell in size and push the stone against the bezel. Then when the sawdust dries out, the stone would be a little loose.

In any case, I now prefer to insert a flat sheet to boost up my stones. It can be a scrap of metal or plastic from product packaging or old credit cards. In either case, just cut a piece to loosely fit into the bezel and drop in the stone (with some dental floss) to check its height.

Transparent Cabs

When bezel setting a transparent cabochon in silver, I usually cut out the back of the bezel to allow background light to show off the colors and patterns in the stone. If this is not possible or appropriate, I worry that the silver bezel will tarnish under the stone and ruin its brilliance. What to do?

My solution is one extra step before setting the stone. I place a piece of thin silver Mylar plastic under the stone to act as a mirror that will never tarnish. Mylar is readily available in craft and gift wrap stores, or in a pinch from a party balloon sup-

plier. You may even want to experiment with using colored or patterned Mylar (i.e. diffraction pattern) under some stones.

Learn New Jewelry Tricks and Techniques with Brad's Jewelry-Making Books
[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)



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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
&
Handmade & polished wire wrapped
Jewelry, Cabochons, Stones & more 
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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**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 2021

Annual Dues: New individual member, \$20.00. Under 18 years of age, no charge. No charge for paid 2020 members who are renewing for 2021.

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: _____

New members, 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

Renewing members: No charge for 2021 membership. Please fill out form and give it to club secretary Janet Wheeler or send it to the above address.

2021

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

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 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.....	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.....	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)
Mark Moore (vice president)
Roberta Oldread (2020)
Melodye Steverson (secretary)

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