

President's Message:

There have been many changes over the past year, perhaps causing us to reassess parts of our lives, including our relationship with people, places and things we may previously have taken for granted. We may be looking at things in a different light, reassessing the part they will have in what I call the "new normal."

That said, I'd like each of you to take some time to think about what membership in the Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society has meant to you in the past. Did you look forward to the monthly meetings to get together with others who share your interests? Did you learn new skills or sharpen old ones in the silver shop? Did you use the equipment in the cab shop or faceting class? Did you help out at past shows? Did you come to rock sales and find treasures to add to your collection? Did you take advantage of club membership to attend federation week at William Holland or Wildacres?

Do you want these opportunities to continue to be available to you?

Consider then that there has been a very small group of members who have been trying their best to keep the club going while struggling with the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. These folks have done an amazing job to hold the club together, but we need your help. We just had another Zoom meeting where we did not have a quorum, so no official business could be conducted.

Club auctions have been held in February in the past. We are currently planning TWO auctions this year. The first will be held online (see additional information in this newsletter). We hope to have a second auction in May (instead of the usual year-end dinner). That auction will be held on our usual meeting night, the third Thursday of the month, 7 pm on May 21, at the clubhouse. This is the final opportunity to raise enough money to keep the lights on for the rest of the year. We need YOU to participate in these events, either in person or online. Hopefully most of you have received the covid vaccinations, or will receive them in the coming month. The clubhouse will be as clean as we can make it. If you attend in person May 21, we ask that you wear a mask and take advantage of the hand sanitizers that will be provided.

We anticipate returning to our pre-covid meeting schedule in the fall and our annual show in March 2022. We can do this, but we need your help.

Julia Larson

Julia Larson, President

Officers, Directors and Appointed Positions for 2020-2021

EMAIL FOR THE FOLLOWING, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED IS: SGAMS2020@GMAIL.COM

Julia Larson, President 727-410-3781 Richard Bunton, Vice President 570-592-6562

Gerri Groves, Recording Secretary 727-656-0322 Patricia Church, Treasurer 941-718-0664

Susan Biel, Corresponding Secretary 315-380-7037 Kelly Nolen, 3 Year Director 727-584-2775
Email: peecheene8@gmail.com

Breta McGuire, 2 Year Director 727-744-7344 Irene Muench, 1 Year Director 727-421-5832
(PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE FOR A CALL BACK)

Sherry Staley, 1 Year Director 727-480-6730 Bill (William) Schmidt, Facilities 727-657-0998
and Show Chair

Donna Sapp, Membership 727-420-0383 JoAnn Knoss, Dinner Committee 727-238-8345
Email: DSapp43@yahoo.com

Debra Bremer, Webmaster 727-298-0061 Susan Biel, Editor, Rock-A-Gram 315-380-7037
Email: bremlapidity@yahoo.com Email: peecheene8@gmail.com

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THE ROCK-A-GRAM IS YOUR NEWSLETTER -

PLEASE CONSIDER SUBMITTING SUGGESTIONS FOR INFORMATION YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE: Submit Articles of interest you come across, something you yourself wrote, HOW-TO'S, photos, trivia, jokes, quizzes, etc. (do include credit information if you are not the author/creator) Email them to:



SUSAN B. @ PEECHKEENE8@GMAIL.COM
DEADLINE IS THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH, SEPTEMBER THROUGH MAY.

SUNCOAST GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

Due to the lack of Quorum, there was no official Board Meeting in March 2021

AS ANNOUNCED IN THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
WHEN WE HAVE OUR MEETING ON MAY 21ST AT THE CLUBHOUSE,
WE WILL BE HOLDING A LIVE AUCTION:
WE NEED AN AUCTIONEER FOR THIS EVENT! **PLEASE** SEND AN EMAIL TO
PEECHKEENE8@GMAIL.COM IF YOU ARE INTERESTED

FUN FACTS

Did you know:

The MOHS Scale was developed in 1822 by Friedrich Mohs when he selected 10 gem stones and set their HARDNESS factors from 1—10.

The hardness is determined by how easily the stone is SCRATCHED - NOT its durability in regards to IMPACT where it might crack, chip or break.



The scale is not proportional! The hardness of DIAMONDS at 10 is many times harder than CONRUNDUM (rubies and sapphires) which is the next gem on the scale.

The hardness scale is used to determine the suitability of a gem for use in jewelry.

BISMUTH—

— an odd looking mineral associated with some odd names! The name “bisemutum” first appeared in the 1400's in the writings of Swiss scientist, Theophrastus Bombastus Von Hohenheim (he went by the shortened Latin name of “Paracelsus”) but credit has been given to French Scientist, Claude Geoffrey The Younger who in 1753 maintained that the name originated from the German words “Weisse Masse” meaning white mass. While minute bits of bismuth occurs in most stones, it is mined in the area of Schneeberg, in the Erzgebirgskreis district of Saxony, Germany!

AUCTION NEWS!!! ONLINE AUCTION STARTS TODAY!!!

My call for help was answered—and many, many thanks go out to Lisa Pesta for coming to the rescue!

Lisa and I spent several hours at the clubhouse while she took photos that she will be uploading to the Suncoast Gem and Mineral Society Facebook page.

She will be launching these photos for an **ONLINE AUCTION** on SATURDAY, April 10th at 3:00 PM and the auction will run until 8:00 P.M. the next SATURDAY, April 17th.

HERE ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS AND RULES FOR THE AUCTION:

Each item will have 1-4 photos and there will be a description, an opening bid and an item number.

IN ORDER TO BID ON AN ITEM: Starting with the Opening Bid amount, or higher, click on **COMMENT** right under the photo and type in your bid. (Please try to keep your bids on the FIRST photo in a group. Do not REPLY to previous comments. Please do not type anything other than bids in the comments). Bids are to be no less than \$1.00 increments.

THE LAST COMMENT ON AN ITEM WILL BE THE FINAL BID (as long as it is the highest bid; should the last bidder enter a bid lower than the previous bidder, the win will go to the highest bidder; if the last bid is the same as the second to last bid, the win goes to the second to last bidder who stated that price first).

THE WINNING BIDDER WILL BE CONTACTED THROUGH THE FACEBOOK MESSENGER APP, so please be sure to have it set up to receive a message about your winning(s) and to supply your contact information for the charge of the sale.

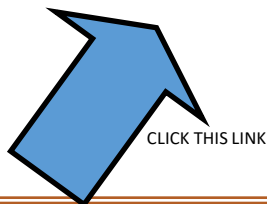
YOU MUST RESPOND WITH YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION BY 8:00 P.M. ON SUNDAY APRIL 18TH OR THE WIN GOES TO THE PREVIOUS BIDDER.

- ♦ If you wish to pay by CREDIT CARD— you will be emailed an invoice from the SGAM STRIPE account (STRIPE is just another version of Paypal or Venmo). Accepted cards: VISA, Mastercard, Discover and AMEX. DO NOT use the GOOGLEPAY option, it is not set up.
- ♦ If you are not local, your items will be combined and the postage calculated; a shipping invoice will be emailed to you and upon payment, the items will be mailed to you.
- ♦ If you are local, you will be contacted about a DATE and TIME for pickup at the Clubhouse.
- ♦ The local pick up will only be CASH or CHECK—(and those who paid previously through STRIPE); there will not be a facility to pay with a credit card, so please plan ahead.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS THOROUGHLY BEFORE ENTERING YOUR BIDS!!

ONLINE AUCTION, SUNCOAST GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY FACEBOOK PAGE

<https://www.facebook.com/events/446801679911694>



BEGINNING SATURDAY APRIL 10TH AT 3:00 P.M.

ENDING ON SATURDAY, APRIL 17TH AT 8:00 PM

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

The SGAMS Annual Meeting was officially in April, and President Julia Larson has appointed a Nominating Committee comprised of Rick Bunton and Susan Biel.

As Julia does not wish to carry on in the capacity as President, **a member who has been on the Board** for at least one year (either currently, or in the past) **will need to be nominated for and accept that position.**

Rick Bunton will accept nomination to retain his position as Vice President, as will Patricia Church for Treasurer, and Susan Biel for Corresponding Secretary.

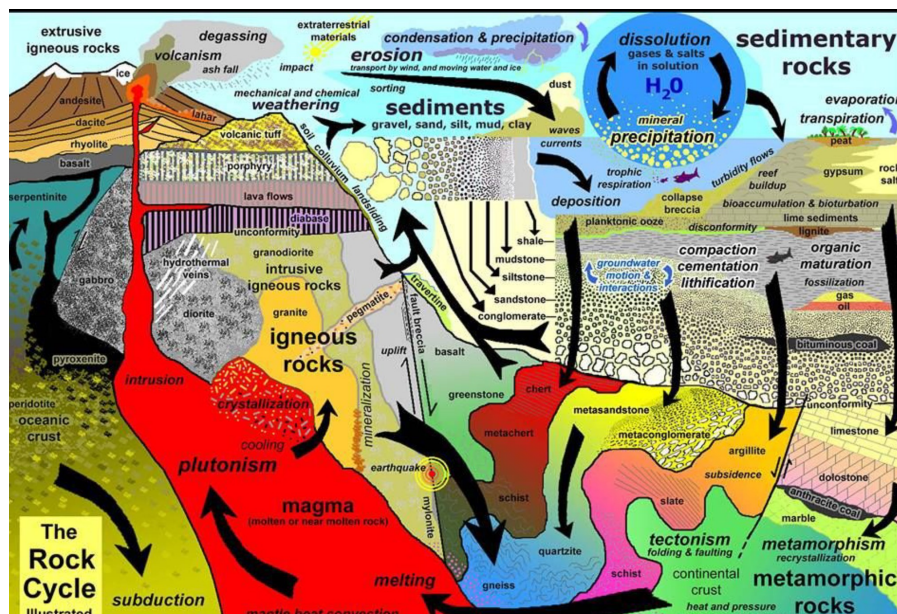
After many years serving as Recording Secretary Gerri Groves is stepping down. We owe her many, many thanks for her dedication to this task since 2014.

Additionally, as the Directors rotate through their positions, Breta McGuire will go from being the Three Director to the Two Year and Kelly Nolen will go from being the Two Year Director to a One Year Director. **We will need two members** in good standing to fill the positions of Three Year Director, and one for the additional One Year Director.

So, when Rick or Susan approach you about serving in one of these capacity's, please give it your thorough consideration! These positions are all voluntary, and serving as an Officer or a Director is a rewarding opportunity to be in on the continued success and viability of our Club. New ideas, fresh energy and the spirit of comradery are what keeps us going and growing! Please "give back" to the Club with your knowledge, enthusiasm and talents.

To read about the DUTIES of these positions, follow this link to The By-Laws on our website and read Articles VI and VIII

<http://www.sgams.com/bylaws/Bylaws.htm>



Gem of The Month: Diamond

While the diamond is the traditional birthstone of April, in recent years the practices used in mining have come into light as being unethical, exploitative, dangerous and the cause of crime, violence and even civil war, garnering it the nickname of the “blood” or “conflict” stone.



Fortunately, there are other stones that have been associated with the month of April over the centuries: sapphire, opal, white topaz and quartz; some of these associations pre-date the recognition of the diamond birthstone; sap-

phire was recognized as the April gemstone in Roman, Hebrew, Slavic and Arabic calendars; opal was noted in the Tibetan calendar.

Quartz has only recently been included as an alternative to diamond, mainly due to its similarity in appearance. One of special note is the Herkimer Diamond, a quartz that was named “diamond” because of its double terminated crystals.

Although it is admirable to pursue a more ethically sourced gemstone, the intense marketing of the Diamond has allowed it to maintain its prominence for both the birthstone and engagement rings. Whilst they are a stunning gemstone unto themselves, I cannot picture a Herkimer diamond ever supplanting the true diamond!

Herkimer Diamonds —>



Helpful Links:

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies web site is at: <http://www.amfed.org>

American Lands Access Association: www.amlands.org

Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies Website at: <http://www.amfed.org/sfms>

National Park Foundation: www.nationalparks.org/explore-parks

Canaveral Mineral & Gem Society: www.canaveral-mgs.com

Central Florida Mineral & Gem Society: www.cfmgs.org

Imperial Bone Valley Gem, Mineral & Fossil Society: www.bonevalley.net

Pinellas Geological Society: www.pgs.rocks

Tampa Bay Fossil Club: www.tampabayfossilclub.com

Tampa Bay Mineral & Science Club: <http://www.tampabayrockclub.org/>


Withlacoochee Rockhounds of Hernando County: www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

An amazing resource is the website: <https://geology.com> — a wealth of information on geology, rocks, minerals, volcanoes, etc. ; maps, and geology products for sale. . .

Our Web Site: <http://www.sgams.com>

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Clubhouse Class Schedules - By Reservation Only*

* please see CLUBHOUSE PROTOCOL DUE TO COVID, PAGE 10

CABBING: Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 pm

Rick Bunton [ricbunton@gmail.com]

Must receive request by Friday

Thursdays 12 to 4pm

Larry Murray (727) 686-1314

Must receive TEXT request by Tuesday Evening

FACETING/WIREWRAPPING: Tuesdays, 6 to 9 pm

Dave Watson 727-541-2917 or sgams2020@gmail.com

SILVER SMITHING: Tuesdays, 6 to 9 pm and Saturdays 1 to 5 pm

Joe Cooper 317-775-5476 or sgams2020@gmail.com

WAX CASTING: By Reservation, announced by Email Blast to All Members

Joe Cooper 317-775-5476 or sgams2020@gmail.com

Rocks and minerals: the oldest storytellers. — A.D. Posey

CLUBHOUSE PROTOCOL DUE TO COVID (revised 11/07/2020)

Dear SGAMS Member

We sincerely hope that all of our members have been staying safe during this most stressful time. Due to the continuing pandemic and County guidelines for COVID-19, the SGAMS Board of Directors made the decision to provide shop time, however, to protect our members and our moderators the number of members allowed in our shops at any time has been limited.

Cab Shop reopening guidelines.

The Moderators emails are listed on Page 9. Interested participants must contact the Moderator by the stated deadline for the day they wish to attend. Please be advised that you must be scheduled for your shop time. If you do not receive permission from your moderator, please do not just show up, for you will be turned away. We must ensure adequate social distancing so only a few members at a time being permitted to attend the Cab Shop session. The moderators will rotate individuals so everyone gets a chance for shop time. We ask for your patience as we develop a schedule that works for everyone.

Silver Smithing Students

For Silver Smithing Students our rules will be similar to the above. Joe Cooper will provide two days each week Tuesday 6 pm till 9 pm and Saturday from Noon till 4 pm.; because of the limited space in the silver room, only two students will be allowed at each work sessions. Joe will send me notification of class times, and when I send the email blast, his email will be included for you to contact him directly—this also applies to Casting Classes.

Please note:

- You must wear a face covering (mask) at all times during shop time or whenever you are within 6 feet of other members.
- As always you are required to clean up all the equipment that you use.
- If you are scheduled for a shop session or class, (please, please, please,) only attend if you are feeling 100% well. If you feel the slightest bit unwell please advise your moderator and stay home. We will all thank you for protecting our moderators and fellow members.

Susan Biel

SGAMS Corresponding Secretary

peechikeene8@gmail.com



Kelly Nolen chats with Janice (in green shirt) and her son Lincoln while Dan Stefanski sorts through a milk crate of BMJ.



Pat Church, Julia Larson and Sandy Daum

Many thanks to Pat Davis for arranging things so that members had a chance to buy some rare and highly sought after Blue Mountain Jasper from Oregon.

In 1967 Leonard Kopcinski, known as “Kop” made claim on a mine near Mitchell, Oregon. He has since passed, but his daughter Janice and her husband Jeremy still maintain the mine. They were here visiting in Florida and Pat saw the opportunity for SGAMS members to obtain this beautiful stone.

BLUE MOUNTAIN JASPER



To some, just a box of rocks, but that's dumb! We know it's a box of POTENTIAL!

These gorgeous cabs were made by Pat Davis from the Smith's BMJ

ROCK-A-GRAM

This is the official newsletter of the SUNCOAST GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, INC. , 4619 69th St. N. St. Petersburg, FL 33709*

This Society is a member of the SOUTHEAST FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES, INC., and its parent society, the AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES, INC

The general purpose of this society is to promote popular interest in education and research in the earth sciences and lapidary arts, and to cooperate with other similar organizations

~~General Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, September through April at 7:00 p.m., at our clubhouse, 4619 69th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL. December and May meetings are special meetings and a time and place will be announced in this bulletin. The public is cordially invited to attend the general membership meetings.~~ [NOTE FOR 2020: GENERAL MEETINGS HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, DUE TO COVID-19]

Dues: \$20.00 single or \$30.00 couple/family; due annually each September

Feel free to copy any material from this bulletin, but please list all byline credits

If you have an article or information that you would like to contribute to the Rock-A-Gram, please email it to peechekeene8@gmail.com with **"FOR THE ROCK-A-GRAM"** in the subject line, by the first Thursday of the month, between September and May. Thank you! ~ Susan Biel, Editor

*[the club no longer has a Post Office box, and now receives mail at this location]

Webmaster

(Website) **Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**
Debra Bremer
Email: bremerslapidary@yahoo.com
Phone: (727) 298-0061
www.SGAMS.com

Membership Committee

(Membership)—**Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**
Donna Sapp
Email: DSapp43@yahoo.com
Phone: (727) 420-0383
3200 74th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702

Show Committee

(Show Chair)—**Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**
Bill Schmidt
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Phone: (727) 657-0998
4619 69th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL

Facilities

(Building Supervisor)—**Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**
Bill Schmidt
Email: SGAMSGemShow@gmail.com
Phone: (727) 657-0998
4619 69th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL

Dinner Committee

(Club Dinners)—**Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**
JoAnn Knoss
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4619 69th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL