

# CRACK 'N CAB



Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY  
web: <https://www.gmss.club> Volume 56 Issue 4, Apr. 2026  
209 Oswego St (Francesca's Plaza), Unit 15, Liverpool, NY



Photo by Judy Cook

## Annual Spring Auction April 20, 7 pm Meeting Doors Open at 6:00 pm; Auction Starts at **7:00 PM!**

Yes, John Sweeney will still be our Auctioneer!

Please review the **REVISED** Auction Rules on Page 6.

### The Gemworld Show's the thing...

Next Show Committee meeting is **April 28th**. Sign-up sheets will be at the April 20th general meeting.

### Our 75th Anniversary Celebrations!

The Decade of the 1970s – Page 5

March Meeting Photos – Page 9 & 10

Rockhound of the Year – Page 9

### Remembering Keith Gilmer

See Pages 4 & 5

“Preparing Specimens for Display”

By Dr. Steve Chamberlain – Page 10 & 11

Mineral and Fossil Contest - coming in May! See Pg 11 for contest rules.

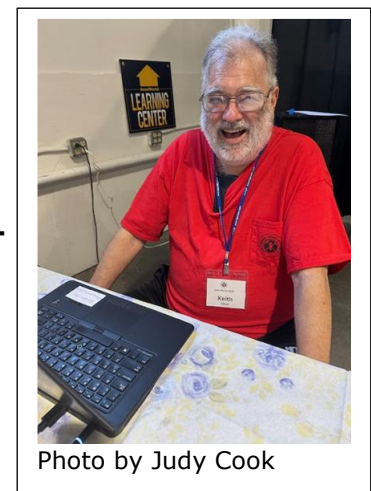


Photo by Judy Cook

## President's Message

Matt Klinger



A long time ago my Dad told me to be sure that I was proud of everything I did. That meant that I didn't strive to make others proud, just myself. Consequently I've spent my life introspectively. Did the work I did today meet my personal standards? Did I build up the people around me? Did I help to make someone feel better about their circumstances etc...

My goal was to be able to

say yes to all of my questions. The profession I chose put all of these things to the test on a daily basis. My life as a father and now grandfather, brother and uncle, and friend also gave me pause to consider my choices.

When John Sweeney approached me about taking over as President of the Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse, I immediately turned inward to go over my list. My introspection caused me to doubt myself. Did I really want to take on the responsibility of the office, no. Was I afraid of failure, yes. Did I think that I would lose friends because of decisions I would be forced to make, yes. Did I fear that choices I would make could damage the club, yes. These and many more doubts cluttered my mind. I needed to wrestle with each one individually to come to the decision that would be the best for me and the club. The end result was that this was my best opportunity to propel GMSS into the future in a very positive way. So I took the leap and accepted the job.

Going over what I could do spurred me to define what exactly "the club" actually was! Was it just an organization that promoted digging up stuff buried in the ground? Was it just a way to identify places to collect, etc. The definition slowly crept up on me one night while I was reading a book on Rockhounding New York State. The club, my club was YOU! You, the bright, funny, intelligent, hardworking members I've come to love. This epiphany sidelined all of my doubts and made decision making soooo much easier. All I had to do when making a decision was to think of how it would affect you.

"The club" is in need of new officers to keep our legacy alive and moving into the future. If you are giving thought to being an officer in our club don't let your fear and doubt keep you from taking on the role of leadership. You will find that there is a great support system behind you, your friends will have your back in all things.

Am I proud of my accomplishments over the past two years, yes, I am. Every time I look into the eyes of my "club" and see that brilliant spark of joy and pride in what they have done to help I'm proud to say that for a short time in my life I helped to put that spark there.

Take the leap, experience the joy.

## Secretary's Report

Marie Mastracco

### GMSS Board Meeting – Apr. 7, 2026

President Matt Klinger called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

#### President, Matt Klinger

-Insurance coverage: Dick Lyons provided information on costs and options. Cheryl Brown made a **Motion** to keep Clubhouse coverage the same, adding \$15k coverage for storage facility. Kristin seconded. All were in favor.

-We still need candidates for the positions to be filled in September. Matt emphasized the need to encourage other members to fill those positions.

#### Vice President, Jeff Huard

April 20 auction – Jeff & John need to go through items. John will be the auctioneer. Keep same number of bid items (4 for individual, 8 per family).

-Discussed August 14th Summer STEM Program cancellation because we don't have volunteers available.

-Amanda confirmed Dave Millis will provide a 2-hour activity/presentation.

Upcoming field trips: Apr. 18 -Deep Springs Quarry Earlville, NY; Apr. 25 & 26 -WCGMC Sterling Hill Mining Sale, Franklin Mineral Museum, Rockhounding Field Trip, Sterling Hill Mining Museum, Ogdensburg, NJ (can go during the same trip as the Franklin Mineral Museum if you'd like); May 23-25 -Crystal Grove, St Johnsville, NY. If interested, contact Jeff.

#### Sgt. At Arms, Kristin White:

Volunteered to copy and enlarge by-laws so they can be in view for members to read should they have an interest in any of the open Board positions.

#### Treasurer, Linda Clark:

Sent cancel form for NYSIF; discussed National Grid, water company bills. Sent in deposit to Erie Canal Park for Aug. 2nd picnic. Will survey members at meeting re: Purchasing boat ride. Discussed ordering t-shirts for Show, 75th Anniversary. Amanda Lytle will create design and review at April 20th meeting. John Sweeney made a **motion** that the Club buy Amanda a new work shirt, seconded, approved. Provided income & expenditure figures.

#### Secretary, Marie Mastracco:

Review of March minutes. John Sweeney made the **motion** to approve the minutes. Matt Klinger seconded, all in favor.

**Newsletter, Larry Petry:** Information for Crack N Cab is due Wed., Apr. 8, by 11:00 PM.

#### Show Committee Chair: Cheryl Brown

-Fee for Rock & Gem ad has been paid. The ad will be placed in a second issue as agreed upon.

-EFLMS editor has the information for the Gem World Show in July and will also add it to the Rochester Club's newsletter. She will contact the Buffalo club and ask for it to be added to their newsletter.

Show Committee Meeting: discussed handout advertising by vendors - \$50 ads. Sign-up sheets in April. Tracey described Minecraft-theme for Youth Area.

Next Show Committee meeting is Apr. 28, 7 pm.

**Membership Committee:** Cheryl Brown

We have 160 members.

-The Bead and Embroidery group will meet at the clubhouse on April 18, 2026, from 1-4pm.

**Lapidary Committee:** Steve Shorey, Bill Verge'

-The Lapidary Lab continues to be busy on Saturdays.

There are no classes being held in April.

-Members are in attendance on Thurs's during open Lab.

-Safety was discussed on Thurs. evenings. It was suggested that a second person be present for safety and security reasons. Classes are full for May & June. No Classes in July.

**Webmaster & interim Librarian, Amanda Lytle:**

-Website visitors peaked at 889, an increase of 97 visits over the last seven days. Domain renews Apr. 30 – give bill to Linda to pay.

-Library: Amanda has 2 new volunteers to assist. The library has had a few new book donations. A new Kiosk for book sign-out and return has been created as well as a display stand featuring a book or topic. The committee continues to categorize and sort on Saturdays during the Lapidary Lab hours.

-Amanda needs at least 2 helpers to assist with sorting and refiling the historic archives. Please contact her if you can assist.

-Reminder: April 16, Science Fair at McNamara Elementary.

**Facebook Administrator, Judy Cook:**

-Posted pictures from our 75th Anniversary celebration, Tracey Criscione with her Rockhound of the Year award, Museum of Science & Technology-MOST Spring Break activity, and our flyer for our 59th Annual Show in July.

-4.1K followers!

**Tracy Criscione, Jr. Rockhound Committee:** (absent)

No report provided.

**Jill Hilliard, Education Committee:** (absent)

No report provided.

Matt Klinger made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 pm. Kristin White seconded. Meeting adjourned by President, Matt Klinger at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Marie Mastracco, Secretary

## Sunshine News

Cathy Patterson



After an extended "cloudy/stormy" (i.e. winter) spell at the Patterson house I'd like to let all GMSS members know I, Sunshine Gal, am back in the game.

Our GMSS gang sends sunny healing energy to **Yvonne Liblanc** who is experiencing a series of health challenges. We send **Yvonne** a rose quartz kind of healing energy!

It was good to see **Mark Grasmeyer** back at the last meeting following his knee surgery. He is now a member in good standing in the "*knee surgery club*." We assume he is rock solid bone wise. Way to go Mark! I hear he is already planning the next trip.

It was super special to see **Dorothy Gilmer** at the last meeting. We will all miss her husband, **Keith**. He was such an important and loved member for many years. No one will be able to look at malachite without thinking about Keith. Both **Gilmers** are deeply loved!

**Loren Patterson**, life member, and contributor to the club since the early 1990's maintains his health as best he can at home while Alzheimer's has diminished his memory and prevents him from getting around easily. His goofy sense of humor has remained. Wife, Cathy, is his primary caregiver so has had to withdraw from many club activities.

Our members matter! We care about you! Text Cathy at 315-480-8907 when you know of someone needing some rockhound sunshine.

## Kudos, Laurels, and Accolades!

Cathy Patterson

My praise goes out to the team that worked tirelessly to make our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration a success! Clearly many hours were spent putting all the details together. The PowerPoint presentation looked so professional! It was fun to see what some of us looked like "back in the day" too. Pizza was a treat as was the delicious cake beautifully decorated.



The surprise grab bags were a special treat too. Thank you to all the planners. You are much appreciated!!

This is a special "shout out" to long time members who contribute in all kinds of ways over the years. You may not be in the driver's (officers) seat but, still, you keep this club machine running by consistently being present, helping out, working at the show, lifting a hand with boxes, tools, etc. That goes for **Tim Halmos, Donna Coleman, Ron Laplate, Steve Albro, Anne Fitzgerald, Michelle Dobson, Chuck Galuski**. A huge thank you to all GMSS members who make this club a thriving place to belong.

# Remembering Keith Gilmer

Cathy Patterson



**Malachite** - emerald-green, grass-green, dark green, banded

- A carbonate hydroxide mineral system
- Hardness 3.5-4, silky luster
- Fracture- conchoidal
- Most familiar is its botryoidal habit
- Occurrences in Bisbee, AZ, Globe, AZ, Nevada, New Mexico, Namibia, Zambia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Australia

## Malachite Maniac – Keith Gilmer!



Our Keith loved this mineral and couldn't get enough. But he is known and loved for so much more. We know he had a lifelong love for "rocks!" Wife, Dorothy, said that when they first met and started dating, she noticed Keith always had a bag of rocks he kept. She asked why he would keep plain rocks? Ah, but a rockhound, which Keith was,

knows why some rocks are special to them. When he explained, while he and Dorothy were at one of our annual shows, these "rocks" also could be made into jewelry that changed her opinion of rocks in general.

Our beloved past president and now gone GMSS member, **Gene Ridall**, invited Keith to join the club many years ago. Over the years, Keith has contributed so much time helping promote the club, educate the members, encourage everyone to do exhibits of their collection at our shows, and be major contributor to the operation of the club.



Keith was our award-winning newsletter editor starting in 2009. He did talks and demonstrations for the youth group. Keith did a program on how to set up an exhibit using our display cases which included how to properly label, how to utilize the limited space by setting up decorative risers, how to keep the exhibit visually interesting, and made us think about what it might teach the untrained public about our hobby.



At our shows Keith was in charge of signage and hiring Labor Ready workers who haul our supplies from the storage bay to the show and back again. He kept our exhibit cases in good



repair. His help with tech support in the Learning Center at our recent shows is legendary! At our annual summer picnic we remember Keith at the grill.

We know that Keith had a lifelong love of minerals. He studied geology in college. At some time Keith zeroed in on his favorite green mineral, malachite. Then it was "off to

the races" collecting malachite from all around the world and in different forms. His collection is extensive and has been shared in exhibits at our annual club show several times.



Years back, he and Dorothy traveled to Arizona to attend the Tucson Show. This show is the "holy grail" of rock and mineral shows in the country. Attending the Tucson show is a goal of many rockhounds. While there, his lifelong dream to see the Grand Canyon in person came true. His friend **Mark Grasmeyer**, who was also in Tucson at the same hotel, shared a story about Keith's deeply emotional appreciation of the grandeur of the Grand Canyon. Rocks certainly do have power over many of us!



Keith the loving father, grandfather, husband, friend, volunteer and tech support angel will be missed! We are thankful for his presence in our club and in our lives.

Photos by Judy Cook



Keith has been my reliable tech guy in the Learning Center for years. Dependable, professional and always a pleasure to work with. I knew things would go smoothly



with his expertise. Keith enjoyed listening to what the speakers had to say so he relished the task as well. He proudly had me check out his new Malachite treasure he purchased at each show. Last year he added a green obsidian piece that was quite impressive. Going to miss him a lot - he was an integral part of the club and played a big

part in the show from fixing and lining up the display cases and assigning the participants to creating his own masterpiece display of malachite specimens.

- Judy Cook

## DESKTOP PUBLISHING *M&S*

**It is after much thought that I have decided to retire.**

The last day that I will be open is **Friday, May 15**. I will accept new orders until **Monday, May 4**. After that I will use the rest of the time to finish up any remaining work. **Any work that is ordered will be dependent on the paper I have in stock.**

Also, I will not be renewing my bulk mail license so I will not be able to do any mailings after April 30.

I thank everyone who has supported me over these many years. I started this business over 30 years ago and never dreamed it would grow to what it is today. It's with many mixed feelings that I close this chapter, but it's time to sit back, do some traveling, and enjoy my family.

*Donna Goyette*

*With this issue of the Crack 'N Cab, we say goodbye to **Donna Goyette**, our printer for close to 15 years. Keith Gilmer, editor at the time, worked with her husband, and he knew that she had a printing business and asked if she would be interested in doing the printing for the newsletter. Thank you, Donna, for your great work for us!*

## Happy 75th Anniversary!

**The Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse began **March 2, 1951**. Richard Sylvester, an employee of NY Central Railroad, was tired of taking the train to Rochester for mineral club meetings. He met with six Central New York people who were also interested in geology and rockhounding - the hobby of searching for gem and mineral specimens - and formed the Syracuse group. The first meetings were held in Lyman Hall at Syracuse University.**

(September 2001 Crack N Cab)

**Syracuse Club History** - By Bob Livingston

### Decade of the 1970s

Membership hit over 200 at its peak. The Club bulletin was renamed CRACK 'N CAB in 1970. For the 20th anniversary dinner celebration at Gen. Hutchinson House Restaurant, in April 1971, 67 members attended. The first Life Memberships were presented in 1971 to: Dr. Chute, G. Henes, E. Renes, J. Raleigh, J. Glannister, M. McCarthy, R. Sylvester. Member Henry Les, a whiz with intarsia, was recognized as a Master Cutter. Nineteen members completed a mineral ID course at Syracuse University in 1971. A club reference library was created in 1972. In March 1973 there was a special club field trip to WARDS in Rochester, NY. Also in 1973, the club began displaying exhibits in banks to promote our club and show. Many club members became show dealers in the '70s. Junior members had their first field trip in 1974. At the 25th anniversary dinner in 1976 at the LeMoyne Manor, Paul Desautels of the Smithsonian Institution spoke on minerals. Margaret Norris was named cook of the week in Empire magazine. Member Paul Dunning became EFMLS Region III Vice President in 1977. The annual club show moved from Mondore's, Lafayette back to Fairgrounds. The show has been at the fairgrounds since the late 70s, and 35 years later is still going strong. Member W. Norris took top jewelry design honors at the Everson Museum show - Presidents this decade were: P. Dunning, D. Gildersleeve, D. Briggs, G. Ridall, J. Ringwood, D. Stimer, C. DeGroot, F. Ruhe, H. Perkins.

## GMSS Auction Rules:

1. Only paid-up GMSS club members can sell items. Anyone can bid on auction items.
2. The auction begins promptly at **7:00 pm**. If you are selling items, please come early to obtain the **two** auction label forms. Set your items up on the auction tables. **Come early - the doors will be open by 6:00 pm.**
3. Each item must have **two** completed auction labels. One is a description form for each item, which will be given to the successful bidder (Mineral name and location collected). The second form will be given to the treasurer for the club records and to give correct payment.
4. **There is an upper limit of 4 bid items per person; 8 bid items per family.**
5. This is not a silent auction. Each bidder will be given a number on a sign to hold up.
6. Any material with a specified minimum bid that does not sell will be returned to the seller.
7. The club will retain 15% of the selling price. The full selling price of the *donated* items will be given to the club.
8. The highest bidder wins the auctioned item. Runners will deliver each item to the winning bidder and collect the payment for that item. Bidders need not leave their chairs. **BIDDERS, PLEASE BRING PLENTY OF CASH.** Items selling for more than \$15.00 can be purchased by personal check. All other items will be cash only. We have no means for swiping credit cards.
9. Sellers cannot bid on their own items.
10. Checks may be mailed to those winning sellers; shortly after the meeting April 20th.

## Geo Lexis (Puzzle) By Anne Fitzgerald

### "This is a Test"

As we celebrate our 75 years as a club, it's fun to think about what people like us, or people who influenced us were doing way back then. Besides the year our club was established, a notable book was published in 1949 called Fluorescence and Phosphorescence by Peter Pjiringsheim. Peter was a pretty bright guy and was able to explain these new concepts of fluorescence and phosphorescence in such a way that his book became a must-read for scientists of his day and well into the future.

Radiocarbon dating also became a scientific tool in 1949. Discovered by Willard Libby, it's hard to think about a time when we couldn't tell the dates of things. Radiocarbon dating quickly started longer range dating methods in the 1950's like Potassium-Argon dating and Uranium-Series dating. (Talk about your speed dating!)

Other things that happened in 1949 were early computers, vinyl records, Legos, and the publication of George Orwell's book 1984. I can't imagine my life without these things.

Although I could not find any evidence of new dinosaur species documented, any new minerals documented, and no new gems discovered in 1949, this lull in discovery may have meant science people had more time on their hands (lucky for us!) which meant more time to form and join clubs.

We've learned a lot since 1949. See how much you know about the present in this True or False quiz. Scared? Remember that True or False is so much easier than multiple choice plus you have a 50% chance of getting it right with just a guess. There is also one final test to see how well your brain is working. The answers can be found on Page 8 of this newsletter.

### True or False Quiz

Scientists have discovered a link between solar storms and earthquakes.

Every inhabited continent in the world had at least one volcano eruption in 2025.

"Astrophage" is a newly discovered disease found in outer space and designated by the CDC to be a critical risk.

Saturn has more than 125 moons.

Jupiter has more than 90 moons.

Every (known) planet in our solar system has at least one moon.

Final Test: In the spirit of April Fool's Day: Can you spot the big mistake in the Geo Lexis for this month?

**NOTE: All the Advanced Lapidary classes are full! EMAIL BILL VERGE' [weverge@gmail.com](mailto:weverge@gmail.com) TO GET ON THE WAITING LIST FOR THE NEXT CLASS.**

### **The Marie Cole Lapidary Lab is open every Thursday 6-9 pm**

Jamie Cary is the Assistant Supervisor  
All grinding, polishing and 6-inch saws are available  
The 10-inch saws will NOT be available for use.  
**\$7 fee for the use of the Lab.**  
Saturday hours are 1 - 4 pm

**Don't forget that the Mineral & Fossil Contest is coming in May! So clean up those collected Minerals and Fossils. See contest rules on Page X.**

## **Upcoming Events**

**SAT., Apr 18 – Field Trip – Deep Springs Road.** This is an excellent site for Devonian fossils. This will be open to the Syracuse club as well as the Wayne County Club. Contact Dave Arcaro by text at 315-935-3627 to sign up or with questions.

**SAT., Apr 18 – The Beading Group - 1-4 pm** at the Clubhouse. All are invited. **See more information on Page 8.**

**Apr 20 – GMSS meeting – 7 pm** at the Clubhouse. **Our Annual Spring Auction! See Rules information on Page 6.**

**SAT-SUN, April 25-26 – Field Trip - Sterling Hill Mine Sale & Rockhounding.** We have been invited to go with the Wayne County Club to this one. For details, contact Dave Arcaro by text at 315-935-3627 to sign up or with questions.

**Apr 28 – Gemworld 2026 Show Committee meeting – 7 pm** at the Clubhouse.

**May 5 – GMSS Board meeting – 7 pm** at the Clubhouse. All are invited.

**May 18 – GMSS meeting – 7 pm** at the Clubhouse. **Mineral Identification: Part 2"** Part 2 of this program will be a hands-on experience. Bring your safety glasses!

**May 26 – Gemworld 2026 Show Committee meeting – 7 pm** at the Clubhouse.

### **Upcoming Spring Shows:**

**Apr 11-12—JOHNSON CITY, NY:** Annual show; New York Southern Tier Geology Club, Inc; Johnson City Senior Center, 30 Brocton Street, PO Box 287; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; Admission: \$5 at Door, Kids under 12 free, cash only at door & kitchen; Featuring: Exhibits, Beads & Supplies, Minerals & Fossils, Jewelry & Gemstones, Flint Knapping, Door Prizes, Silent Auction, Food & Drink for Sale; contact Mark Smith, (807) 760-3769; Website: <https://efmls.org/clubdetails/new-york-southern-tier-geology-club-inc/>

**Apr 11-12 - North Haven, CT** - New Haven Mineral Club 50Th Annual Show Gems Minerals Fossils April 11 – 12, 2026 Clarion Inn, 201 Washington Ave, North Haven CT 06473. Saturday 9:30AM – 5PM Sunday 10AM - 4:30PM Admission 6.00 Children under 12 FREE Info: [newhavenmineralclub.org](http://newhavenmineralclub.org)

**Apr 11-12 - Midland Park, NJ** - 36th Annual North Jersey Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show; Midland Park High School, 250 Prospect St, Midland Park, NJ 07432; Sat 10-5; Sun 10-4 Food truck on site, door prizes, show is inside so rain or shine.

**Apr 18-19—FREEPORT, NY:** Show & sale; Kaleidoscope Gem Shows; Freeport Recreation Center, 130 E Merrick Rd; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4:30; Adult \$6, Children under 12 free with adult, Mention you saw it here for a \$1 discount; Come see our beautiful displays of minerals, fossils, gemstones, gold & silver jewelry, & beads & findings. There are even furnishings created from minerals. Chat with the dealers about their items. It's wonderful for all ages & a great way to spend a few hours; contact Evelyn Gose, (631) 271-8411; Email: [evelyn\\_gose@kaleidoscopegemshows.com](mailto:evelyn_gose@kaleidoscopegemshows.com); Website: [kaleidoscopegemshows.com](http://kaleidoscopegemshows.com)

**Apr 25-26—TROY, OH:** Annual show; Miami County Gem & Mineral Show; Miami County Fairgrounds - Duke Building, 650 N. Co Rd 25A; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; Adults \$3, free admission for children under 18; contact Dewey Buck, (937) 308-3012; Email: [deweybuck12@gmail.com](mailto:deweybuck12@gmail.com); Website: [www.mcgamc.com](http://www.mcgamc.com)

**Apr 25-26—CUYAHOGA FALLS, OH:** Show & sale; Akron Mineral Society & Summit Lapidary Club; Emidio & Sons Expo Center, 48 E. Bath Rd; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Adults \$6, Seniors (55+) & High School & College Students \$5, Children 7-14 \$1, Scouts in Uniform & Children 6 & Under Free; Celebrating 50 years - 1976 to 2026. We expect 40 vendors with a large variety

of products. We will have geode cracking, a gem mine, children's craft table, demonstrations of lapidary arts, silent auction, food trucks, handicap accessible; contact Evelyn Tryon, (330) 673-9664; Email: [etjtryon@juno.com](mailto:etjtryon@juno.com); Website: [summitlapidaryclub.com/gemboree](http://summitlapidaryclub.com/gemboree)

**May 2-3—TOPSFIELD, MA:** Annual show; North Shore Rock & Mineral Club; Topsfield Fairgrounds, 207 Boston Rd, Rt. 1; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-4; General admission \$7; \$6 with copy of ad/coupon; Children under 12 free; free parking; contact Joe Weisberg, (781) 861-6653; Email: [northshorerockandmineral@gmail.com](mailto:northshorerockandmineral@gmail.com); Website: [www.northshorerock.org](http://www.northshorerock.org)

**July 11-12—SYRACUSE, NY:** Wholesale & retail show; Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse; NY State Fairgrounds, Center of Progress Building, 581 State Fair Blvd; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; \$8, children 12 & under free; contact Cheryl Brown; Website: [www.gmss.club](http://www.gmss.club)

## Answers to Geo Lexis

### Answers to True or False

Scientists have discovered a link between solar storms and earthquakes. True

Every inhabited continent in the world had at least one volcano eruption in 2025. True

"Astrophage" is a newly documented disease found in outer space and designated by the CDC to be a critical risk. False

(Astrophage is totally made-up phenomenon consisting of a swarm of sun-grown microbes from Andy Weir's 2021 novel, and also a movie called *Project Hail Mary*.)

Saturn has more than 125 moons. True

Jupiter has more than 90 moons. True

Every (known) planet in our solar system has at least one moon. False (Mercury and Venus have no moons.)

Answer to The Final Test: **Our club was established in 1951, not 1949.**

Sources and further reading:

<https://ijpest.com/Contents/20/1/e01003.html>

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2026/02/260224023209.htm>

kira Mizuno, Minghui Kao, Ken Umeno. Possible mechanism of ionospheric anomalies to trigger earthquakes – Electrostatic coupling between the ionosphere and the crust and the resulting electric forces acting within the crust. *International Journal of Plasma Environmental Science and Technology*, 3 February 2026 DOI: [10.34343/ijpest.2026.20.e01003](https://doi.org/10.34343/ijpest.2026.20.e01003)

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/mapped-all-of-the-worlds-volcanic-eruptions-in-2025/>

*Fluorescence and Phosphorescence* by Peter Pjiringsheim. Argonne National Laboratory, Chicago, Illinois, 1949 [www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)

[www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/these-sea-slugs-can-eat-sunlight-but-theyre-no-astrophage-heres-how-the-project-hail-mary-antagonist-has-a-real-life-analog-in-earths-oceans-180988361/](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/these-sea-slugs-can-eat-sunlight-but-theyre-no-astrophage-heres-how-the-project-hail-mary-antagonist-has-a-real-life-analog-in-earths-oceans-180988361/)Niamh Ordner, March 18, 2026

<https://timeslife.com/life-hacks/from-space-to-medicine-the-biggest-discoveries-of-2025/articleshow/118923555.html> Ujjal Lohar, March 12, 2025

## The Bead Group

Our next meeting will be on Saturday, **April 18th from 1:00 to 4:00** at the Clubhouse. It will cost \$5.00 each for use of the clubhouse. Please contact Cheryl Brown at either [gmsrocks@gmail.com](mailto:gmsrocks@gmail.com) or 315-708-9122 (text) if you are planning on coming. I will give you the materials list so you can bring your own supplies, or you can get a kit there for a nominal fee.

## Show Committee

Our next Show Committee meeting will be **Tuesday, April 28 at 7:00** at the clubhouse. Come find out about our July *GemWorld* show and how you can get involved. **All able-bodied club members who live within 50 miles of the clubhouse are expected to work at the show as a condition of membership.** There is a job for everyone! This is the fundraiser which supports our club and enables us to maintain our clubhouse.

## Welcome New Members

**Robin Burgess**  
**Lisa Desimone**  
**Amy Jackson**  
**Brian Peters**  
**Stacy Potter**  
**Antonio Vallejo**

### March 16, 2026 Club Meeting

Photos by Judy Cook

### **75th Anniversary Celebration!**

**Pizza, cake, grab bags, and more fun. Plus: Girl Scout cookies - special door prizes!**

Our 75th Anniversary Party!!



Free grab bags with surprises inside for the attendees. Plus the 25th yearbook.



There have been lots and lots of awards over the years!



Rockhound of the Year, Tracey Cricione! Congratulations.





Bob Livingston, Cathy Patterson



and John Sweeney shared perspectives on their years of experience in the Club.



Celebration with a special anniversary cake, and with pizza donated by Francesca's!



## Preparing Specimens for Display

Dr. Steve Chamberlain

You've self-collected in the field. You think you might have some keepers. Now what do you do with them?

Wash with soap and water using a brush.

Evaluate the next step.

Do you trim? How much? Clean more? With what? ?????

### Getting rid of unnecessary matrix

- Use a mechanical, hydraulic trimmer. This is like a big vice \$100 - \$300. This snaps off portions of your rock and can be used on specimens up to a foot across.

Screw type is cheaper. This works like a hammer and chisel. To protect drusy and small crystal specimens wrap that part with a foam rubber pad (like what is used as protective packaging) and secure with a wide rubber band. This prevents pieces flying into hard-to-reach corners of the workshop.

- Use a saw — for quartz this might be a good way to remove matrix rock. For large fluorites sawing is a good alternative to hydraulic as these are not usually strongly attached to matrix.

### Cleaning up its act -

#### Mechanical Method

-Water gun — Albatross- like a large water pick for dental cleaning only much more powerful. About \$300. The size of a paint sprayer and runs on electricity. WEAR KITCHEN RUBBER GLOVES FOR SAFETY.

-Ultrasonic Cleaner — Branson Commercial cleaner - \$300 - \$400. Used for cleaning larger commercial objects and precision machining parts. Purchase through Fisher Scientific. This water solution heats up as it works and makes cleaning better. Caution — fluorite, sphalerite, gypsum, and other like minerals can be ruined in this kind of cleaner. Quartz, agate and like minerals clean well with this method.

-Sand blasting — This is a box with built in rubber gloves that can be used to clean certain specimens. Peanut hulls, glass beads, sand and other materials can be blasted onto your specimen to clean it. Experimentation is your best guide but consider the hardness of your specimen and the hardness of your blasting material.

#### Chemical Method

Enhanced detergent - use a high quality, clear, dishwashing detergent like gold colored Dawn or something similar with no scent. Scour with Comet or Ajax making a paste with a little water to scrub the specimen. Use caution on softer minerals which will scratch with this method.

#### Stronger Chemical Cleaners—

-Hydrochloric acid = Muriatic acid (can be purchased at hardware store) removes calcium deposits from your

specimen. Always add acid to water! Use eye protection, Do this outdoors. Use rubber gloves. This takes a couple of hours to do. Use only in a plastic bucket or box. Put specimen in pan. Add cold water to cover. Add muriatic acid slowly until it starts to fizz. Ratio of 1:10 (acid:water). When fizzing action stops add more acid until removal of calcium is complete. Do not pour into septic tank. This works like liquid Drano in your plumbing and should not be especially dangerous to discard. You must wash this chemical off your specimen as it will continue to work and may ruin your specimen.

-Oxalic Acid— Removes iron deposits from quartz. Oxalic acid is a powder that can be purchased from your hardware store. Another name for it is Iron Out. Put specimen in plastic container, pour hot water in then add oxalic acid following box directions. This process takes overnight to complete and works faster if the solution is heated. Follow with a soap and water washing. This is not recommended on specimens containing calcite, fluorite, apatite, etc. as it will dull them by partially dissolving them. Best if used on quartz. You must wash this chemical off your specimen as it will continue to work and may ruin your specimen.

● Waller Method— This is more advanced and harder to obtain. Sodium hydro sulfite (from a chemical supply company), sodium bicarbonate (baking soda), sodium citrate (restaurant use). These 3 ingredients are combined and used in solution to clean certain minerals — Chub Lake material, goerhite, hematite, etc.

## Mineral & Fossil Contest Rules

- Members in good standing may enter specimens personally collected that have not been entered in a prior mineral contest of the Gem & Mineral Society of Syr. as well as specimens purchased. See Silver Pick rules below. Limit one entry per category.
- Divisions- Senior Division - members 18 years of age and over Junior Division - members under 18 years of age.
- Categories: **Minerals:**
  - Cabinet specimens - 2x3" or larger
  - Thumbnails and miniatures - under 2x3"
  - Micro-minerals, mounted or not mounted, requiring magnification.
  - Suites - a group of specimens of any size from one location. (Micromounts excluded because of judging time limitations)**Fossils:** one specimen, any size
- Specimens may be mounted or not mounted, cleaned, trimmed, etc. to make them more attractive but may not be lacquered or otherwise coated (except fossils). Points in judging will be awarded by the following schedule:

	3A+3B	3C	3D	Fossils
<u>QUALITY</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>65</u>
<u>RARITY</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>LABELING</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>15</u>
ORIENTATION		10		
<hr/>				
<u>SHOWMANSHIP</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>

Quality: freedom from damage; attractiveness, aesthetic appeal, luster

Rarity: rareness, which increases a specimen's desirability as a species, locality, crystal form, etc.

Labeling: **Minerals:**

- Species (Fleisher's "Glossary of Mineral Species" is a suggested reference)
- Variety if appropriate
- Locality

**Fossils:**

- Phylum and class
- Locality, including geological period and rock formation if possible

Correct spelling is important. Do NOT put your name on the label.

Competitors are encouraged to provide a second label with information about the rarity or significance of the specimen.

Orientation: Competitors entering micro minerals are encouraged to include a microscope if possible.

Otherwise, micros should be oriented to view from above.

6. Prizes for self-collected entries: Awards will be based on point achievement only.

**First Place** - a blue ribbon for highest score with a minimum of 80 points

**Second Place** - a red ribbon for second highest score with a minimum of 70 points.

**Third Place** - a yellow ribbon for third highest score with a minimum of 60 points

In addition, all specimens scoring over 60 points will receive an honorable mention if a ribbon is not awarded.

7. Silver Pick (purchased specimen) Contest: For members who purchased their entry during the past year. Categories are the same as in #3 above. Judging and points will be the same, but no ribbons will be issued.

8. The club shall provide 2 qualified judges who will indicate, on a scorecard with each entry, the points awarded, and any helpful comments for the competitor's information (time permitting).

9. The contest may be entered by proxy.



**Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse**  
**PO Box 2801**  
**Syracuse, NY 13220**  
**First Class Mail**  
 Time-Dated Material



[www.amfed.org](http://www.amfed.org)    [www.amfed.org/efmls](http://www.amfed.org/efmls)    [Future Rockhounds](#)

Eight people organized the Gem and Mineral Society of Syracuse in 1951. Since that time it has grown in membership to include adults, families, and young folk. The Society was incorporated in 1969 under the same name.

The objectives of the Society are to stimulate interest in mineralogy, paleontology, and the lapidary arts. Member interests include collecting, identification, and display of minerals, gems, fossils. Members share and develop their artistic skills in jewelry design and creation.

Our monthly meetings provide social and educational experiences. Field trips give collectors chances to find specimens and enjoy the out of doors, exercise and time with old and new friends.

**Meetings – 3rd Monday of the month**  
**General Meeting @ 7:00 pm**  
 (NO meetings July, August, December)  
 209 Oswego St (Ponderosa Plaza) Unit 14 & 15, Liverpool, NY  
*Visitors are ALWAYS welcome!*

See online Newsletter <https://gmss.club/crack-n-cab-newsletter>  
 You can also visit our Facebook Page  
**Annual Member Dues:**  
 Adult \$15 – Family/Couple \$20 – Junior \$10 – Life \$5

If you would like to join or renew membership, download the application form (PDF) see <https://gmss.club/membership-info>

You can get a form at a meeting or send requests to: GMSS, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY 13220. We will mail an application/renewal form to you.

**2025 – 2026 GMSS Officers/Contacts**

**-President:** Matt Klinger [pres@gmss.club](mailto:pres@gmss.club)

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