

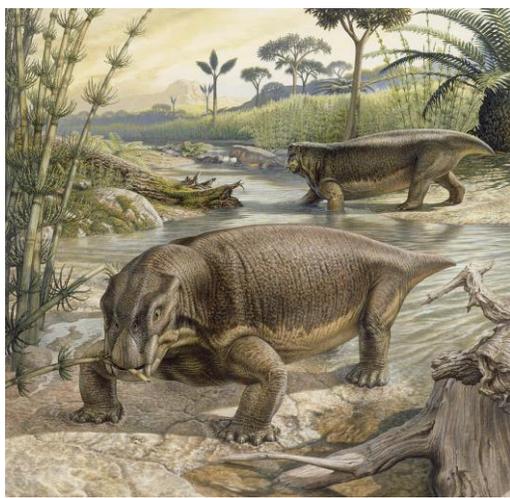
CRACK 'N CAB



Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY
web: <https://www.gmss.club> Volume 56 Issue 1, Jan. 2026
209 Oswego St (Francesca's Plaza), Unit 15, Liverpool, NY

Happy New Year!

January 19 Club Meeting



palaeos-blog.blogspot.com

“Rarely Told Stories of Dinosaurs... and More!” - 7 pm

Speaker Dave Millis “The Rock Doc” has surprising stories you won’t hear anywhere else about Ice Age Megafauna, Triassic Lystrosaurus and much more. Warm up at the Clubhouse with club friends and a great talk by our very own Rock Doc!

At 6:30 pm – The Story of Selenite in 15 minutes

Junior Rockhounds Meet at 6:30



**PALEONTOLOGICAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTION**

Special Message From PRI
see Pages 4 - 5

BAG O' BOOKS
Sale
Bundled-Up Themes
Mystery Grab Packs
\$5
Each!
AT THE CLUBHOUSE
SATURDAYS-LAPIDARY HOURS
All Thru January
'til Gone!
SALES WILL HELP FUND BOARD GAMES
FOR CLUB SOCIAL GATHERINGS!

More info on Page 6

**Bead Group, Show
Comm. Meetings – Pg 7**

Our 75th Anniversary Year Begins! See our early history Pages 3-4



Photos by Judy Cook

Holiday Party Photo Review – Pages 8 - 11

President's Message

Matt Klinger



It's so hard to sit here and watch videos of people digging up these crazy plates of Amethyst knowing that it will be close to three months before I can go out and get dirt under my nails. Oh well, hopefully this year will be the year I open that super pocket that has eluded me for so

long, maybe. Maybe I'll get to go on a field trip to excavate some beautiful mineral or gem. Maybe I'll get to sit at a campfire with my grandchildren laughing about our day in the mine. That would be the best. Building memories that will last forever, yeah that will be the best.

How are you coping with your cabin fever? Are you watching videos, dusting off your collection, or maybe taking a nap lol. Stay positive, the time will pass quickly.

We have some great opportunities for you this year. We'll tell you all about them at the upcoming meeting. Spoiler alert someone could go to Wildacres tuition free! Stay tuned.

Matt

Secretary's Report

Marie Mastracco

GMSS Board Meeting – Jan. 6, 2026

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

President, Matt Klinger

Rockhound of the Year: Will be announced in the near future.

Working on presentation.

New Vice President: Introduced Jeff Huard as our new Vice President.

Classified section in our newsletter

- Discussed as a potential option.

- Will need to determine pricing, forms and details.

- To be revisited.

Option for business/vendor advertisement in the GMSS Newsletter:

- Discussed where in the newsletter this would be placed, as well as the need for pricing, forms and details.

- To be revisited.

Gem World booklet

- Something GMSS had done in the past.

- Is this something we would like to do again as it will give vendors the opportunity to advertise.

- Will be revisited.

EFMLS Scholarship Candidate for Wildacres Workshop, May 11-17, 2026.

- Interested parties will identify themselves via written statement to include what they have contributed to GMSS.

- Submission deadline to EFMLS is 3/10/2026.

- GMSS will have final decision at the March 3, 2026, Board Meeting and forward the scholarship form to EFMLS.

GMSS Scholarship for Wildacres attendance/enrollment:

- To provide an extra GMSS member the opportunity to attend in 2026.

- Discussed the need to identify in the budget. Linda Clark stated we are able to accommodate.

- John Sweeney made the *Motion* to offer this opportunity to another deserving member. Kristen White, Sgt. At Arms seconded. All were in favor. No nays.

- John Sweeney *Motioned* for the announcement to be placed in the GMSS Crack and Cab. Dick Lyon seconded the motion. All were in favor. No nays.

Vice President: Jeff Huard

Summer Picnic: Jeff has contacted the Erie Canal Park in Camillus for the **GMSS picnic, proposed for August 2, 2026**. Will keep us posted

Field Trips:

- Dave Arcaro stated he had a few winter field trip ideas.

- Stated Corning Museum of Glass was well received last year. Provided details regarding reservation.

- Dave provided other potential options and will continue to provide information and assist if needed.

- Linda Clark suggested the Syracuse Salt Co. & Salt Museum.

Sgt. At Arms, Kristin White

GMSS email system: Questions regarding the use and operation of the GMSS email accounts. Answers and explanations were provided.

Outreach idea:

- Offer weekly or monthly geological classes to home-schooled children at the GMSS Clubhouse.

- Kristin will pass the idea on to Jen Hilliard, Education Committee Chair.

Treasurer, Linda Clark:

EFMLS: Still working on the Insurance piece. Will keep us updated.

Update on finances:

- Provided most recent income and expenditure figures.

- Vendor fees for this year's Gem and Jewelry Show are due this month.

- We will need to make reminder phone calls for some of the vendors.

National Grid: Received notice that they will be at the clubhouse on 1/14/26 between 3-5pm to read the meters. Will need to gain entry inside as well as outside. President Matt Klinger will contact the maintenance person.

IRS: Linda is actively working on our taxes.

NYS Insurance Fund: Payment for Gem World Security is due now. This is now an annual policy. Linda will send the payment.

Secretary, Marie Mastracco:

Letters of Appreciation: Read thank you letters from the Plymouth Congregational Church and the Blessed Sacrament Church. They expressed their appreciation of our food donations over the holidays.

Donations:

- Identified two new donations to the club.
- One donation included lapidary and miscellaneous supplies. The other donation included Wolff wax and tools.

Newsletter, Larry Petry:

- Information for Crack and Cab is due Thursday, January 7, 2026, by 11:00 PM.
- Current printer is retiring. He believes he has identified another printer business.

Webmaster & interim Librarian, Amanda Lytle (via email):

Website Updates:

- Home Page and Calendar have been updated for January programming.
- Lapidary Thursday hours have been added and advertised.
- The Show Committee has also been advertised as well.

Website December Metrics as of 1/4/2026:

- Past 30 days: 556 visits
- Past 7 days: +119 visits
- Site visits are up 215% compared to previous week

Website subscription renewals:

- Web Hosting Starter subscription for club email forwards automatically renews January 5, 2026. Amanda will update the price once the bill is received. She will also mail out the reimbursement form.
- Prices seem to be increasing again and she will review expenses.

Library

- Crystal Brown has volunteered to design the Book Sale ad for the \$5 book bundles. The ad is posted on our website.
- Marie and Kristin assisted with ideas and bundling books together in November/early December.
- Mid-December, a lapidary student's two children were eager to help move the stacks of discarded books from the library to the table. Amanda let them pick a tumbled stone from the blue coffee can as a reward for all their help and then showed them how to make a gemstone necklace.
- Amanda needs help arranging the book sale items and thanked everyone who has participated in this project.

Facebook Administrator, Judy Cook: Not present.

Gem World Show Chair, Cheryl Brown:

- Next meeting is January 27, 2026, at 7:00 PM.

- Linda Sweeney, Treasure will cc Cheryl a copy of the NYS Insurance Fund bill.

- Cheryl and John Sweeney will call the vendor previously discussed and review expectations.

- Bead and Embroidery group: The group will begin meeting on Saturday, 1/24/26. They will meet from 1pm-4pm.

Lapidary Committee: Steve Shorey

Classes

- Classes are booked through March 2026.
- January classes begin this Saturday, January 10, 2026.

Extra hours at the club house: To begin Thursday, 1/8/2026.

Hours are from 6pm-9pm. Jamie Carey will oversee the clubhouse during that time. Steve Shorey will attend the first evening for any assistance.

Lapidary Equipment: Bill Verge researched the lapidary equipment prices and presented it to the Board. John Sweeney will look to see if he can assist with what Bill has located.

Tracy Criscione, Jr. Rockhound Committee:

Dinosaurs: Will offer a group on dinosaurs on January 29, 2026, at 6:30pm prior to the General Meeting.

Membership Committee, Cheryl Brown

- Member count is 135.

Jill Hillard, Education Committee: Not present.

Kristin White made the *Motion* to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm, seconded by Marie Mastracco. Meeting adjourned by Matt Klinger at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Mastracco, Secretary

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.



SYRACUSE MINERAL CLUB

MEETINGS: 2nd Friday of each month at 8:00 P.M., Syracuse Museum of Natural History, Lyman Hall, Syracuse University Campus, Syracuse 10, N. Y.

OFFICERS: President: Richard L. Sylvester Vice President: Sheldon W. Towne Secretary -Treasurer: Miss Elizabeth Mary Henes

MEMBERS

- Apfel, Dr. Earl T., 210 Buffington Road, Syracuse 10, N. Y. Bachman, Charles H., R.D. #1, E. Senaca Turnpike, Jamesville, Chute, Dr. Newton E., 100 Haven Road, University Heights, Syracuse 10, N. Y. Eidt, Mrs. Walter B., 37 Maple Road, Baldwinsville, N. Y. Ellsbury, William R., R. D., Keeseville, New York. Farrell, Donald, Chittenango, New York. Francis, Bill F., Box 9, Collendale, Syracuse, N. Y. Henes, Miss Elizabeth M., 208 Tamarack Street, Liverpool, N.Y. Henes, George William, 208 Tamarack Street, Liverpool, N. Y. Knapp, Barton W., 303 Brooks Avenue, Rochester, N. Y. Pendray, Miss Guenever, 491 Westchester Avenue, Crestwood, N.Y. Ritzler, George O., 1640 Valley Drive, Syracuse, N. Y. Ritzler, Mrs. George O., (Helen B.) 1640 Valley Drive, Syracuse Robinson, Charles H., 623 1/2 - 16th Street, Puyallup, Washington Schoonover, Miss Mae B., Maple Road, Baldwinsville, N. Y. Sylvester, Richard M., R.D. #3, Onondaga Hill, Syracuse, N.Y. Sylvester, Richard L., 154 Parkside Avenue, Syracuse 7, N.Y. Sylvester, Mrs. Richard L., (Hester), 154 Parkside Avenue, Syracuse 7, N. Y. Thorpe, Miss Marjorie H., 107 W. Newell Street, Syracuse 5, N.Y. Towne, Mr. Sheldon W., Chittenango, N. Y. Towne, Mrs. Sheldon W., (Janet), Chittenango, New York. White, William, 303 Mott Road, Fayetteville, N. Y. White, Mrs. William (Mary), 303, Mott Road, Fayetteville, N.Y. Wilson, Roy E., 402 S. Beech Street, Syracuse 10, N. Y. Zodac, Peter, P.O. Box 29, Peekskill, N. Y.

Syracuse Mineral Club members list (1951)



Syracuse Mineral Club 1st Anniversary, March 14,1952

Mineral Exhibit At Public Library

A wide variety of precious, semi-precious and synthetic precious stones and minerals will be exhibited by the Syracuse Mineral Club for a month starting Saturday at the Public Library. Joseph T. Raleigh is chairman of the exhibit. Sapphires, rubies, opal, turquoise, jade, tourmaline and many other stones will be included in the display. George W. Henes is president of the Syracuse Mineral Club, which meets monthly on the second Friday in Lyman Hall, Syracuse University. Other officers are. Miss Guenever Pendray, vice-president; Miss Margaret Thorpe, recording secretary; and Miss Elizabeth M. Henes, corresponding secretary and treasurer.

-The Post-Standard Wednesday, September 2, 1953, Page 13

The Baldwinsville Messenger

BALDWINVILLE, N. Y., March 11, 1954

The Syracuse Mineral Club will hold a meeting at 8 p.m. Friday at the Lyman Hall Museum, Syracuse University campus. There will be a talk, illustrated with slides on "The Germanium Story." The speaker will be Anthony Rugare of General Electric. All are invited.

www.newyorkhistoricnewspapers.org



PALEONTOLOGICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTION

Thanks to an incredible outpouring of support, PRI is thrilled to announce that we have reached our 2025 funding goal, including paying our mortgage in full. The Institution and our Museum of the Earth will remain open and operating and serving our audiences! We want to extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those near

and far who answered the call to save this organization. Because of these efforts, PRI will continue its scientific and educational mission for future generations.

This accomplishment was the result of hundreds of gifts large and small, from individuals across PRI's communities, from Ithaca, and New York State, and across the nation (and beyond); from scientists, educators, families, children, students, collectors, professors, and friends of friends; from people who care about climate change and evolution and tourism and science education and fossils and art and Earth science. This extraordinary show of solidarity has reminded us that PRI's mission matters—not just to our local community, but to supporters across the country who believe in the power of science, education, and discovery. I reflected more deeply on what this moment means for us and the amazing people who made it possible in a new blog post: [PRI's Wonderful Life](#).

There is much still to be done. We are excited to now be able to plan for PRI's future, and we look forward -- with renewed hope and a strengthened sense of purpose -- to sharing PRI's plans for long-term financial sustainability in the months ahead. For now, we want to offer our sincere appreciation to every person who helped us achieve this milestone. Your generosity has safeguarded an irreplaceable institution, and we remain committed to honoring that trust every single day.

Thank you for standing with us, and for believing in what we do. We are endlessly grateful.

Sincerely,
Warren Allmon
Director, Paleontological Research Institution

Welcome New Members

John & Nancy Mueller

**Geo Lexis (Puzzle)
By Anne Fitzgerald**

"Of Tiles And Smiles"

It's that time of year again. The time when news-people do endless stories about New Year's resolutions with most of the TV news-people confessing they can't keep them and can't remember them. They go on to show experts with tips to keep resolutions. Then the news-people go back to confessing again that they can't keep them. (Don't they listen to their experts?) These same news-people do an outstanding job of reading and relating the news and they get up very early and still manage to have lives outside of their work and get to their studios in all kinds of weather. If they can't keep their resolutions, is there any hope for the rest of us? I do try to keep mine, and yes, I do have to remind myself. I also keep them very general and I write them down. My brother upon retirement sent a list of things he has learned over the years. One of those things was to "enter every store with a smile." (My brother is in sales.) I liked that idea, so I tried it this past year. I don't know if it helped anyone else, but it did help me. I've always had some trepidation entering stores (especially during Covid), so it was a little like overcoming a weakness to smile through my trepidation.

Another weakness I have is being oblivious. I miss out on a lot of details.

Fossils have lots of details and re-occurring patterns. So this year, my resolution is to pay attention to more details (and more fossils).

Scientists have recently discovered yet another reoccurring pattern in nature.

Found in fossils and living creatures and even in minerals, tile-like patterns have been discovered in abundance.

These tile-like patterns develop over time to give animals, plants, and even viruses advantages. Elephants, for example, have tile patterns in their skin that help to retain water. There is even a type of limestone called Oolitic limestone with grains that form a tile-like pattern. Even humans favor tile-like patterns. That tile floor in your house saves years of carpets going into dumpsters.

So while I am paying attention to detail, see if you can come up with a simple resolution that is easy to practice and remember, like smiling more. Or perhaps just to work your brain more, like with word puzzles.

Puzzle:

Take the capital letters from the list below, unscramble the letters, and spell out something I hope will make you smile. Answer on Page 7.

List of fossils or animals with tile-like patterns:

turRtles
 ElEphants
 AmmoNites
 corals
 crinoids
 WortY-frog fish



(Ad graphic designed by Crystal Brown)

Bag O' Books Library Clearance Sale

In the Clubhouse room during Saturday (and Thursday) Lapidary hours.

Only \$5 Each! Use the money jar on the table.

Treat yourself to a pre-bundled theme or an adventurous Mystery Mix in a gift-wrapped package.

Each sale will help the Library purchase a quality board game for clubhouse get togethers.

Warm up your interests through these cold winter months with a pack of reading goodies. Gain insights & enhance your knowledge for the upcoming rockhounding season—or you may find a new lapidary, travel adventure or collecting interest!

The Beauty of Analog Books:

Physical books create a satisfying and comforting pastime, offering a refreshing break from the online world. The moment I open a book, it welcomes me without the harassment of aggressive advertising, Al slop, or sensationalism derailing my attention. I truly believe these features in traditional reading

materials help improve our focus and concentration. Heck, books even smell good, too.

It's also wintertime with unsavory weather conditions and long nights. Our free time is vulnerable to the cycle of chasing dopamine hits from consuming more online media and streaming services than we'd like. This is a good time to reconnect with books to help counter effects that digital overconsumption can cause.

About These Clearance Books:

These clearance books are "culls" from downscaling our Library that's become overcrowded over time. They're great quality learning & reference reads, just extra copies our Library doesn't have room for. We're making room to grow our local resource materials and to make the Library more user-friendly. Don't let 'older' make you think 'outdated' - older books in gem & mineral genres are powerfully educational and at times more accurate and informative than what's published today.

Happy reading!

Amanda Lytle

Beginning Thursday

January 8, 2026

The Marie Cole Lab will be open
 Every Thursday

6 pm to 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 pm to 4 pm

Upcoming Events

Jan 19 – GMSS meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse. From Dave Millis: There are those people who say that if the saber tooth tiger was discovered today it would be named the saber tooth bear. An omnivore and not a predator.

Also, the walrus has no trouble stalking and attacking clams. These are two examples of animals without opposing teeth. There is a third - Lystrosaurus from the Triassic who, in addition, had a birdlike beak. It was the first of many reptiles in the Triassic and it ate and digested plants, walked on all fours and inherited these from the Permian extinction.

In my program in January, hear other rarely-told stories about dinosaurs, including how dinosaurs evolved with bird hips and birds evolved from lizard hips.

The **6:30 pm** 15-minute talk will be about selenite.

Junior Rockhounds - In January I plan on holding the meeting before the regular club meeting, **meeting at 6:30. Topic will be dinosaurs.**

- Tracey (thalanaya@gmail.com)

SAT., Jan 24, 2026 – The Beading Group - 1-4 pm at the Clubhouse. All are invited.
See information to the right.

Jan 27 – 1st Gemworld 2026 Show Committee meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse. Be in the know from the beginning! All are invited. Stop in and learn how you can be a part of the most popular Gem Show of the East!

Feb 3 – GMSS Board meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse. All are invited.

Feb 16 – GMSS meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse.

Feb 24 – Gemworld 2026 Show Committee meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse.

Mar 3, 2026 – GMSS Board meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse. All are invited.

Mar 16 – GMSS meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse.

Mar 24 – Gemworld 2026 Show Committee meeting – 7 pm at the Clubhouse.

Upcoming Winter Shows:

**None in our area.
Better luck next month!**

Answers to Geo Lexis

Something to make you smile:

NEW YEAR

Sources and further reading:

J. Ciercierska-Holmes et al. Tiled material systems: Exploring biodiversity and multifunctionality of a universal and structural motif. PNAS Nexus. Vol. 4, November 2025. doi:

10.1093/pnasnexus/pgaf046

www.sciencenews.org/article/nature-tiles-patterns-biological

Nikk Ogasa, 12/10/2025

The Reconstituted Bead Group

We are bringing back the GMSS Bead Group after several years' absence. We had so much fun doing bead embroidery that we decided to keep it going. **Our first meeting will be on Saturday, January 24th 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 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, January 27 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.

Sun., December 7 – Annual Club Holiday Party

– at Island Escape,
Photos by Judy Cook

It was a great party!! Food was very good. Everything was beautifully festive !!

Then we had a gift exchange amongst us.



It is that time of the year! It was brisk outside; the snowflakes were falling and inside we gathered at the Island Escape in Baldwinsville for our annual holiday party!



We had a Toys for Tots drive and a Marine joined us in celebrating and offering his help wherever he could.



There were unwrapped toys for Toys for Tots...



presents for the gift exchange...



and food donations for the food bank!





He must be a Marine working under cover.



Our club member Ken Maliszewski was the chef and did a wonderful job preparing our feast.



Yummy food choices.



One satisfied customer...after another!





Lovely table decorations, with a head popping out of the flowers!



A lovely couple from way up North.



So, who photographs the photographer?



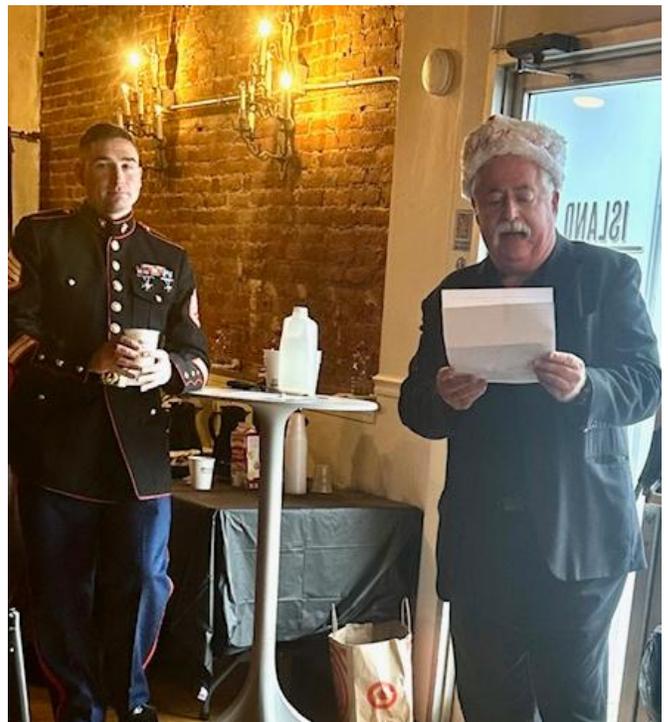
It's what she always wanted!



It looks like a slab of meat to me!



How many eggnogs did this man have?



And the event would not be complete until John reads *Twas the Night Before Christmas!*



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



www.amfed.org 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 Klingner pres@gmss.club

-Vice-President: Jeff Huard vp@gmss.club

-Treasurer: Linda Clark treasurer@gmss.club

-Secretary: Marie Mastracco
secretary@gmss.club

-Jr Rockhounds: Tracey Criscione
kidsrock@gmss.club

-Membership Chair: members@gmss.club

-Sgt at Arms: Kristin White
sgtatarms@gmss.club

-GemWorld Show Chair: Cheryl Brown
 315-708-9122 show@gmss.club

-Interim Club Librarian: Amanda Lytle
library@gmss.club

-Lapidary Committee Contact: Steve Shorey
lapidary@gmss.club

-Newsletter: Larry Petry 315-472-9226
editorgmss@gmail.com

-Facebook: Judy Cook
socialmedia@gmss.club

-Website: Amanda Lytle
webmaster@gmss.club

-Photographer Extraordinaire: Judy Cook
-Hospitality Committee Chair: Doria McIntosh
 315-471-1340 hospitality@gmss.club