

# CRACK 'N CAB



Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse, PO Box 2801, Syracuse, NY  
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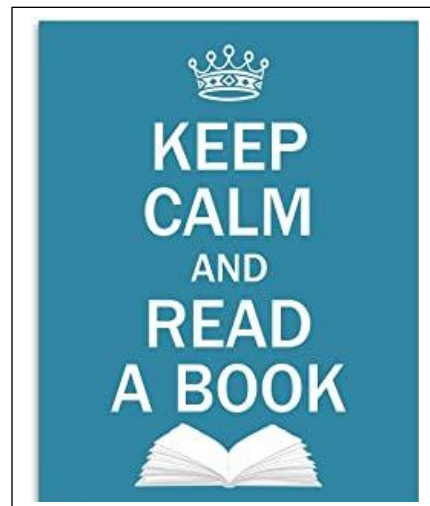
**MARCH MEETING – CANCELLED!**

**APRIL AUCTION – POSTPONED!**

**What Are We Supposed to Do?**



See Page 6



See Page 5



See Page 7

## President's Message

Cheryl Brown



You are the best!

I hope this newsletter finds you and yours healthy and not going too stir crazy with all the sheltering in place. A big thank you to all the first responders and medical front-liners in our club.

We obviously are not having an April meeting. The **Spring Auction** will be rolled into the October auction. We will have to wait and see what the governor mandates as to whether we have a **May meeting**. There will be an email blast and a notice posted on the website and Facebook page if the May meeting is canceled.

The board met last night on *Zoom*. The main topic of conversation was **our annual show** in July. We will make a final decision at the May board meeting, but the consensus now is that we will probably cancel the show. The reasoning is that people may not come due to COVID infection concerns. Also, because people will have been out of work for months, they will not have the discretionary funds to spend on rocks. It would not be fair to the vendors to have low attendance in the show. It costs them money to come to our show and we need to make it as profitable for them as possible.

### **Elections will be held at the June meeting.**

The following people have stepped forward to serve:

President: Dick Lyons

Vice President: Kris Boronczyk

Secretary: Cathy Patterson

Treasurer: Open – we are still looking for someone

Sargent-at-Arms: John Sweeney

Editor: Larry Petry

Web Master: Judy Cook

If you would like to serve in any of these positions, please let Keith Gilmer or me know. Note that we are still looking for a replacement for our Treasurer, Linda Sweeney. Also, we are looking for a Membership chair.

Stay safe. See you all soon.

## Secretary's Report

Cathy Patterson

### **No Report**

(Note: This *will* be reflected in Cathy's pay)

## Upcoming Events

### **You're kidding, right?**

Please check back next month!

## Geo Lexis (Puzzle) By Anne Fitzgerald

### **"April Loofs"**

One thing leads to another when you like to learn new things.

Many of you have probably already realized "Loofs" is an anagram for Fools. That got me wondering if "loof" is a word. Much to my delight, I found a new word! A loof is the palm of your hand.

And what can we do with our loofs? We can do lots of things with rocks. If you are stuck in the house or out of the house, here are some ideas.

Unscramble the following for things you can do with rocks:

**gidggin**

**tusnidg**

**tipslngit**

**dounhgin**

**ginlecclot**

**zingnarago**

**towringh**

The solutions are on Page 5 of this newsletter.

## Dealer's Perspective



## North East Gemshows



**By Fred Haynes,**  
Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club News, April 2020  
Reprinted with permission

We cannot collect in groups; we won't meet in April and the workshop is closed. Much as we do not like those facts, we are living with them. But there are others in our hobby who are not as fortunate. For our dealers, much of their livelihood depends on interacting with us. Some have shops that are now closed; nearly all of them set up at shows to sell minerals, fossils, gems, and jewelry. Normally we do not "advertise" for dealers in our newsletter, but these are not normal times.

Many dealers spend the winter prepping their inventory for spring and summer events, some go to Tucson to restock, others spend the hard northeast winters wrapping cabochons, selling gems, and making labels for newly acquired minerals. Spring is filled with gem and mineral shows for them to kickoff their spring season. For nearly a month, that activity has ceased and shows through about mid-May are now canceled. But some dealers are making lemonade with the lemons we have all been dealt this year.

The following is almost two weeks old, but I think it still works today. It is from a Facebook post by Cathy Stalker (Stones by Stalkers) and is dated March 27<sup>th</sup>.

*"In a world without Covid 19, today we would be finishing lunch at OIP in Wysox and heading to the Wysox firehall...We'd be unloading and setting up... We'd be hugging and chatting with all the other vendors, some we haven't seen in a year. The sun is shining and the smell of spring is in the air. We'd be anticipating seeing the regulars that come every year and all the great volunteers that make the show happen. BUT it is not to be in 2020. This year is very different. Nothing we've ever experienced before. So when one door closes we attempt to open another".*

Another of our GemFest dealers (Ridge Valley, Rich and Amanda Meier) established a Facebook group called [North East Gemshows](#) where dealers can show items and do live shows from their homes. There are at least three of our regular dealers there now as Jim Fowler has also posted video to the new FB group. Visit the site and you can see when some might have additional online shows. All the pictures above are from the North East Gemshows FB group site.

## Birthstone of the Month

### The History of Birthstones

The first century A.D. Jewish historian Josephus believed there was a connection between the 12 gemstones in the breastplate of Aaron, the first High Priest (Exodus 28:15 – 21) that represented the 12 tribes of Israel, the 12 months of the year and the 12 signs of the zodiac. There is also a list of 12 Foundation Stones of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21:19 – 20.

Over the centuries, and in different cultures, the list of birthstones changes.



### April: Diamond

Diamonds are not only a girl's best friend, but they have been admired and valued for centuries. Some historians estimate they were traded as early as the 4th century BC. Diamonds are thought to have been first recognized and mined in India. Alluvial deposits could be found along the rivers Godavari, Krishna and Penner, and the gemstones were used as religious icons.

By the 1400s, diamonds were becoming fashionable accessories for the wealthy. The first diamond engagement ring on record was given by Archduke Maximilian of Austria to Mary of Burgundy in 1477.

India led the world in diamond production until the mid-18th century, then Brazil took over when diamonds were found there by gold miners in 1725. Brazil dominated the market for more than 150 years.

Around 1870 the Diamond Fields were discovered in Kimberley, South Africa, and that started the modern diamond market. Cecil Rhodes established De Beers Consolidated Mines Ltd in 1888. By 1900, De Beers controlled approximately 90 percent of the world's production of rough diamonds.

The word "diamond" is derived from the Greek word "*adamas*," meaning "proper," "unalterable," "unbreakable," "invincible," or "untamed." This references its hardness (it's the hardest natural substance) and its durability.

Diamond's legend includes the idea it had healing power. Old tales said it could cure brain disease, ease pituitary gland disorders and draw toxins out of the blood. It was able to ward off the "evil eye" – which caused sickness, poverty and death. It was thought to be an antidote to poison and provide protection against the plague (hmm...). And some claim it helps to provide longevity, beauty and happiness.

Diamond is a solid form of the element carbon and are extremely rare. Most come from the earth's mantle. They are almost always found in kimberlites on the oldest parts of cratons – the stable cores of continents with typical ages of 2.5 billion years or more. Kimberlite is an igneous rock found in narrow dikes, sills and pipes. It is hybrid rock with a mix of small minerals and rock fragments. Diamond has the highest hardness, so on the Mohs Hardness Scale it is a 10. Commercially viable deposits of diamonds are in Russia, Australia, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Canada.

In the United States, diamonds have been found in Arkansas, Colorado, Montana, New Mexico and Wyoming. The Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas is the only mine in the world where the public can dig for diamonds.

Because of its resistance to scratching, diamonds are a popular gem for rings, earrings, necklaces and other jewelry forms.

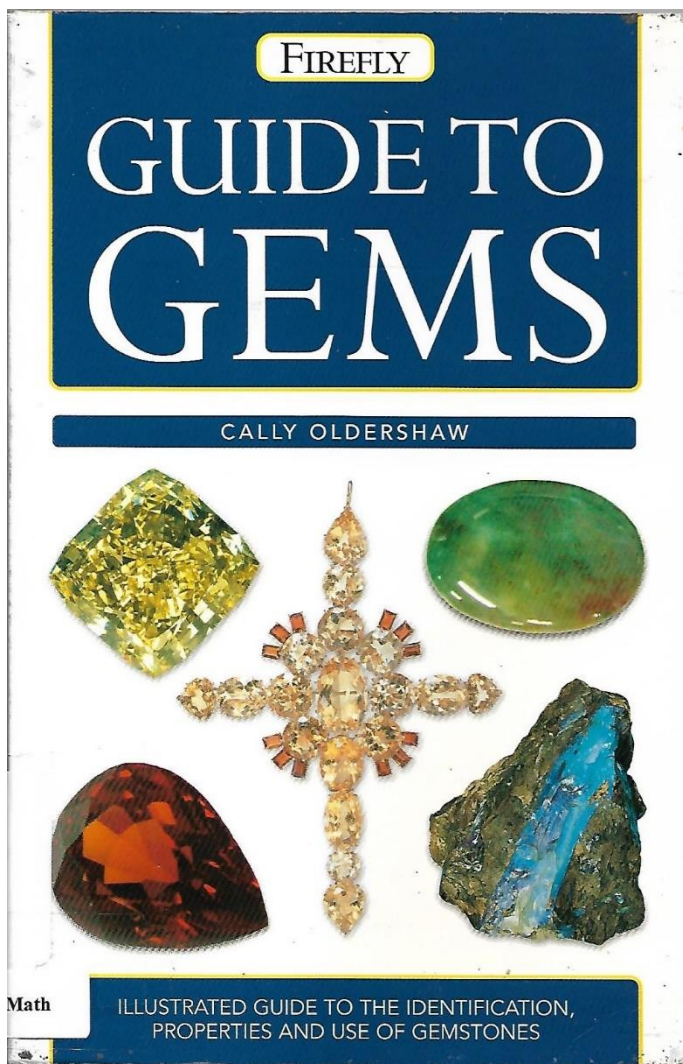
Some famous diamonds originating from India include the blue Hope Diamond and the Koh-i-Noor. Famous diamonds from South Africa include the Cullinan ("Star of Africa") and the Taylor-Burton.

## Answers to Geo Lexis

gidggin	digging
tusnidg	dusting
tipslngit	splitting
dounhgin	hounding
ginlecclot	collecting
zingnarago	organizing
towringh	throwing (not recommended.)

Source: [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)

## A "Gem" from the Public Library



*Guide to Gems* by Cally Oldershaw is published by Firefly Books Ltd, in both the United States and Canada.

From the back cover:

"A fascinating, richly illustrated guide to the identification and use of gemstones. The introduction describes the geology, chemistry and properties of gems in clear and accessible terms, and also provides a valuable color key. The main section supplies complete descriptions of a wide range of gems, with illustrations of the crystal, the gem, common cuts and jewelry." The 224-page paperback book describes more than 130 varieties of gemstones. It has over 850 photos of gems, crystals and jewelry, and more than 50 drawings and diagrams. There is a section of world maps of important gem locations, although it doesn't include anything for New York!

The first section of the book focuses on precious gems in their many forms. Practical information includes collecting; crystal structure; fashioning and cutting; weighing and measuring stones and handling and storing gemstones.

The second, and main, section provides complete descriptions of a wide range of gems, organized by their chemical composition.

The author, **Cally Oldershaw**, is a gemologist and science educator, and author of several books about gems. She is Education and Parliamentary Liaison Officer for the Geological Society of London and is an examiner for the Gemmological Association of Great Britain.

*You could find this book through the Onondaga County Public Library system – if they were open. It would be 5563.8 OLD, or "Science & Math" in some libraries. In the meantime, keep dreaming!*

## Rhyolite

By Shannon Phillips

If, like me, you belong to rockhound groups online, you may see members of those groups ask for rock and mineral identification based on photos that they post. We all know that making an identification based on a photo alone is never an accurate way to get information; nevertheless, people are more than willing to hazard a guess. Among the more common guesses is rhyolite. I have seen this term before, primarily used to describe a material commonly referred to as wonderstone (see below) and to describe rainforest rhyolite, which, to me, looks like jasper. I've set out to try to understand what rhyolite actually is.



Geology.com describes rhyolite as “an extrusive igneous rock with a very high silica content.” This probably explains why it sometimes looks like jasper. While rhyolite is partially composed of quartz, it also includes plagioclase and sandine, both members of the feldspar family of minerals. Rhyolite is formed by effusive volcanic eruptions, where magma flows out of the volcano rather than shooting out in an explosive eruption. To form rhyolite, the lava must cool quickly on the surface, giving crystals little time to grow. If the lava cools more slowly, it forms porphyritic rhyolite, which contains visible crystals of the component minerals surrounded by glassy microcrystalline rock. Because of these properties, rhyolite polishes nicely and can be shaped into cabochons. When the stone contains certain colors or patterns, it may be given a trade name, such as the aforementioned wonderstone and rainforest rhyolite. The fine-

grained material can be knapped into points and tools, as it was by prehistoric cultures in North America.

In order for effusive eruptions to occur, the magma must allow gas bubbles to escape, thus avoiding the type of pressure that causes explosive eruptions. Because of the permeable nature of the magma, when it cools as lava gasses are trapped inside, creating vugs (cavities) in the hardened rock. Over time, vugs are filled with groundwater or hydrothermal gasses. As they evaporate or dissipate, minerals are deposited in the cavities. Some minerals that are commonly found in rhyolite are opals, topaz, and beryl. Mexican fire opal is often polished in the rhyolitic matrix, producing attractive collectors' pieces or cabochons for jewelry. Red beryl, the rarest color in the beryl family, occurs only in topaz-bearing rhyolite. The best specimens of red beryl, and the only ones large enough to be faceted, are found exclusively in Utah. Although rhyolite may be pretty in its own right, its real value is found as a host rock to these more exceptional mineralogical formations.

While most rhyolite is an unremarkable gray-pink color, trace minerals present during formation can cause it to have banding or a broader range of colors. It can be very difficult to differentiate these patterned and colored versions from jasper based on looks alone. Rhyolite is found world-wide, which makes it an easy guess when people requesting identification do not indicate where the sample was found. However, it actually takes much more than a photo on the internet and a guess, no matter how reasonable, to produce an accurate identification.



**So, Shannon is not certain this sample is rhyolite. Readers, can you help decide?**

**Virtual Field Trips** by Bill Lesniak

**Wayne County Gem and Mineral Club News, April 2020**  
(reprinted with permission)

We cannot venture into the field this month or even to the public library, but we can open our computers and iPads and take some virtual field trips. Here are a few interesting ones I found while surfing this past week.

- [https://naturalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NM/NH/z\\_tour-117.html](https://naturalhistory2.si.edu/vt3/NM/NH/z_tour-117.html) - Smithsonian Nat. Museum: Gems & Minerals
- <https://trenton.mcz.harvard.edu/> - Site was created in 2004. Is an overview of the Social History, Paleontology, Fauna and Geology content of the Trenton Group at West Canada Creek in New York
- <https://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/stones/index.html> - Building Stones of our Nation's Capital
- [https://digitalmaine.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1578&context=mgs\\_publications](https://digitalmaine.com/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1578&context=mgs_publications) - Virtual Tour of Maine Minerals
- <https://vft.asu.edu/iVFTLocations/GrandCanyon/GCOptions.html> - Exploring the Grand Canyon, 3 different trips
- <https://www.sciencefriday.com/educational-resources/360-degree-expedition/> - Columns of the Giants in California
- <https://apps.npr.org/rockymountain-vr/> - Rocky Mountain National Park
- <https://earth.google.com/web/@63.54723198,150.19005812,1214.69683367a,40751.95436882d,35y,177.14213275h,0t,0r/data=CjASLhIqNzU2Y2E0ODIyZWQ4MTFIOWIxYjg0N2VkNWZmY2M1NDAiCmdjc19pdGluXzI> - Denali National Park. AK
- <https://vrglaciers.wp.worc.ac.uk/lyell/lyell.html> - Glacial landscape of Lyell Canyon in Yosemite National Park, CA

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**Your Federation is with you at this time**

On behalf of the Eastern Federation, I wanted to reach out to all our valued affiliate members at this time regarding our current state of the world. The big rock we call Earth doesn't seem so big anymore. The COVID-19 Novel Coronavirus will

likely be hitting home very soon if it hasn't already. My thoughts and prayers are with you all!

As most of you are aware, the majority of the roughly 10,000 members that make up all 112 EFMLS Societies are in the high-risk population age demographic. We hope that everyone takes personal responsibility in exercising caution and care by adhering to the CDC Recommendations and all Public Health Guidelines.

Two weeks ago, on March 11, when the WHO declared the coronavirus a world pandemic, I announced the cancellation of the March EFMLS Annual Convention that was scheduled for this coming weekend. A difficult decision indeed, especially given that the state of the spread was essentially microscopic at that time. But here we are today. Your safety and wellbeing to me has always been paramount.

**What else can us Rockhounds do?**

**No shows, no meetings, and possibly no field trips** for our Societies in the foreseeable future. The Federation is exploring ways we might come together online. I'm sure we could all use a mineral fix (or several) in the coming period as a distraction from the world. We are open to suggestions, whether it be a Zoom online meeting or recommended videos to share and watch online. Web would like to hear from you.

**Consider helping a cause.** I made a donation to [nokidhungry.org](http://nokidhungry.org) to help kids get meals they are now not getting at school. Since our youth is our future for our Societies, seemed rather fitting.

**Reach out to your fellow members.** Check in with them. See how they are doing and if they need anything you could possibly provide for them – while keeping yourself safe. Just a phone call, email or even a text. How good does it feel when we connect?

And for those who need some rock fodder now...  
[Atlasobscura.com/places/hall-of-curious-stones](http://Atlasobscura.com/places/hall-of-curious-stones)

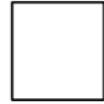


David Nock, EFMLS President

**EFLMS Communications**  
in partnership with Breaking Rock News  
(Dated March 28, 2020)



**Gem & Mineral Society of Syracuse**  
**PO Box 2801**  
**Syracuse, New York 13220**  
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[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 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month**  
**Future Rockhounds @ 6:30 - General Meeting @ 7:30**  
**(NO Meetings Jul, Aug, Dec)**  
**209 Oswego St (Ponderosa Plaza) Unit 14 & 15, Liverpool, NY**  
**Visitors are ALWAYS welcome!**

See online Newsletter <http://gmss.us/resources/newsletter>  
 You can also visit our facebook and flickr pages  
**Annual member dues**

**Adult \$10 • Family/Couple \$15 • Junior \$5 • Life \$5**

If you would like to join or renew membership download the application form (PDF), see <http://gmss.us/about/membershipform.pdf> 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.

## 2019 – 2020 GMSS Officers/Contacts

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**-Secretary:** Cathy Patterson [secretary@gmss.us](mailto:secretary@gmss.us)

### **-Jr Rockhounds & Web:**

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**-Hospitality Chair:** Mary Davis 315-885-4416  
[shows2gou@gmail.com](mailto:shows2gou@gmail.com)

**-Sgt at Arms:** Ed Suchon [sgtatarms@gmss.us](mailto:sgtatarms@gmss.us)

### **-GemWorld Show Chair:**

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