

LOW COUNTRY Diggings

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PRESIDENT RAMBLINGS

By Whit McMillan



BIRTHSTONE OF THE MONTH

By Will Postell - "Rock Reporter"

Well, another club show has come and gone. Thanks to everyone that volunteers to help us make it a success, which is almost all of our members. A particular thanks to Karen Havenstein, our show chairperson. The SFMS meeting also went very well and a special thanks to Mark Easterbrook and Katie Huemmer for making that happen. I'm always impressed by the amount of work that gets done to put this show on. I heard, again, from many dealers that the dinner is the best one around! Our show isn't the biggest, but several dealers mentioned that they enjoy it more than any others because of the club member's hospitality. I certainly look forward to it every year myself. It seems as though we did a little better than last year in terms of money, as well. We had a lot of kids that were pleased by their geodes and grab bags. The demonstration area was always busy with a lot of questions and potential new club members. I know this show is a lot of work, but I think we really present our hobby well and spark a lot of interest among the folks that visit with us. On another note, I know all of you will join me in wishing Charles Richmond the best and a quick recovery. Thanks again everyone for a show we can be proud of!

Whit

Emerald ($\text{Be}_3(\text{Al,Cr,V})_2\text{Si}_6\text{O}_{18}$), a beryllium aluminum silicate, attributes its elegant deep clear velvety-green color to trace amounts (parts per million) of chromium (Cr), vanadium (V), or iron (Fe). The green of the emerald represents rebirth of the seasons and of life, strength, and inner bliss. The emerald takes its name from its Greek word for color, "smoragdos," meaning "green stone." Because emeralds can be extremely fragile and brittle in combination with internal stress and sensitivity to pressure, care must be taken in heat-treating them. In antiquity, they were cut into cabochon form either round or oval shape. This smooth treatment, which gives the stone polish rather than glitter, was succeeded by the so-called emerald cut, a rectangular shape with sharp angles or truncated sides. The emerald cut is now usually reserved for stones of exceptional transparency.

Colombia is the foremost producer of emeralds in the world. Muzo, above all, is the most famous of Colombia's emerald mines. The Muzo region has produced quality stones of matchless beauty for more than 1,000 years. Emeralds occur as six-sided (hexagonal) prismatic crystals found in acidic igneous rocks like granite, but also larger crystals form in pegmatites and in mica schists.

see *Birthstone* (Continued on page 3, column 2)



2010 WILLIAM HOLLAND WORKSHOP DATES

June 13-19; October 10-16

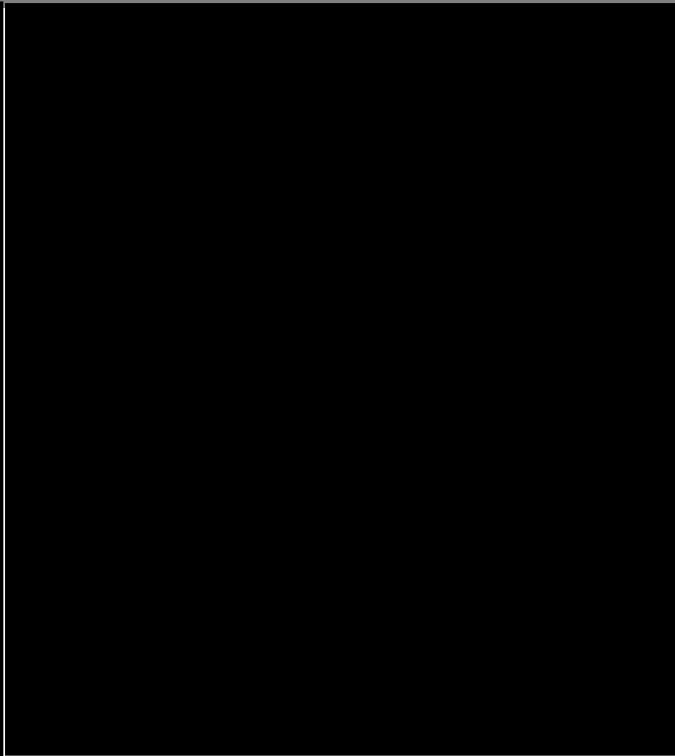
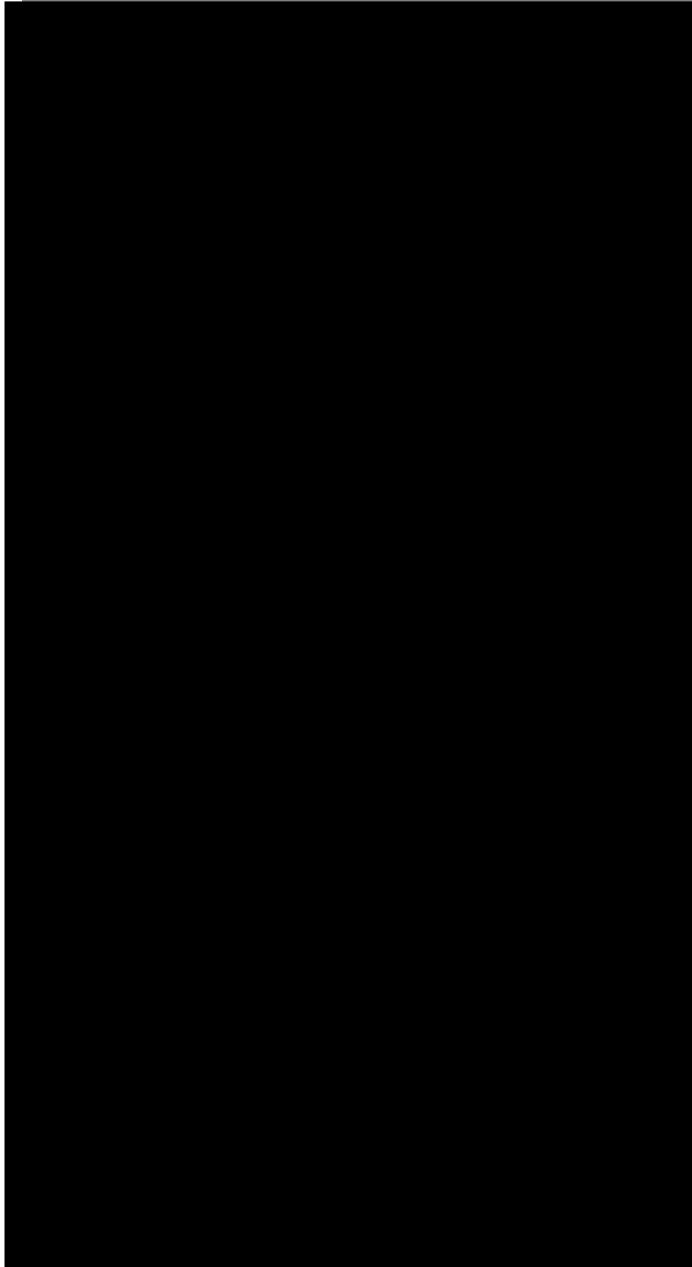
2010 WILDACRES WORKSHOP DATES

August 23-29; September 13-19

Program for May 13, 2010

It's SILENT AUCTION Time!! Come see what new items will be up for bid. There will be a few surprises.

We meet Thursday, May 13 at the Ashley River Fire Department on Dorchester Rd. in North Charleston. Fellowship and refreshment begins at 6:30 P.M. followed by a short business meeting at 7:00 P.M. The Last Minute Preparations program follows the business meeting. See you there!!



MEMORIAL DAY

HAPPY Mother's Day



PREVIOUS MEETING REVIEW

By Mark Easterbrook

Last month we did our final preparations for the show, stuffing grab bags. We stuffed over 200 grab bags. There was a lot of help from the members working together in assembly-line fashion. Everyone had a lot of fun. Thanks to all who helped with the final preparations.



APRIL MEETING MINUTES

By Secretary Larry Moss



The April 8, 2010 meeting of the Lowcountry Gem & Mineral Society was called to order by Vice President John Fee at 7:05 P.M. at the Ashley River Fire Department classroom. The Opening Prayer was led by Larry Moss... The Pledge of Allegiance was led By John Fee... We welcomed a new member, Michael Ammons... The Treasurer's report read by Carol Pierce... The motion was made and seconded to accept the report as read. A motion was made by Sarah McNay to approve the March 2010 minutes as published in the Bulletin. Walt McNay seconded and the motion was approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Sunshine - Sarah McNay reported that President Whit McMillan was home sick.

Hospitality - Sarah McNay announced that Anne Turner will be back in time for the Annual Show. The Dealer Dinner is at 6:00 PM Friday, April 30, 2010. The club will provide shrimp, barbeque pork, and fried chicken. Everyone needs to bring salads, desserts, and side dishes. She also thanked everyone who brought refreshments for the evening's program.

Program - This month's program was stuffing grab bags for the show. Next month's program is the silent auction.

Show: The club needs demonstrators. Sign up with Walt McNay. 300 beaded bracelets will be available for sale at the registration table sign-up sheet for the Geode Dig/Fossil Dig is being passed around. There will be 18 dealers at the show. On April 26, Yvonne Gillis will be interviewed on a local television station at 9:30 A.M. in Mount Pleasant.

Field Trip: 1) There is a Dixie Mineral Council Field Trip to Hogg Mine near La Grange Georgia scheduled for April 17, 2010. 2) The semi-annual Graves Mountain Rock Swap is scheduled for April 23-25, 2010. Check the following web site for details: <http://www.amfed.org/sfms/rock-swaps.html>. 3) There is a field trip to Standard Minerals Quarry in Glendon, NC on May 15, 2010. Pre-registration is required. 4) There is a field trip to Thermal City Gold Mine in Union Mills, NC on May 8, 2010. \$5.00 fee for all day.

Old Business: 1) The club participated in The Charleston's child fair on March 14, 2010 between 9:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Katie Infinger was in charge of our club's participation in the event. Member's donated polished

rocks were given away at the event.

New Business: There was no new business

The business meeting was adjourned at 7:20 P.M.



Birthstone (Continued from page 1)

It has a hardness of 7.5 to 8 on the Mohs Scale of Hardness and is about three times as heavy as water. Inclusions are common flaws in emeralds, but they do not always reduce quality and value. A fine-colored highly prized deep green emerald may be of greater value than a diamond of comparable size. The largest single crystal of gem-quality emerald, weighing 7,025 carats was found in Colombia. The Smithsonian Institute has some beautiful emerald necklaces, rings, broaches, and faceted stones for viewing.

In 1993, a team of professional divers twelve miles off the Florida Coast in deep water discovered three Spanish ships dating back to the Colonial period. They brought up a load of incalculable wealth, including a skull cut from emerald rock crystal, 25,000 carats of cut emeralds, another 25,000 carats of polished emeralds, a number of emerald crystals weighing 24,644 carats, and hundreds of pieces of exceptional jewelry of Aztec and Mayan origin with some of them pre-Colombian ceremonial objects of solid gold.

Localities: Colombia, Brazil, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Madagascar, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia, and North Carolina in the USA.

Sources: [Diamond & Precious Stones](#) by Voillet; [Dana's Minerals](#) by Hurlburt; [Rocks & Minerals](#) by Jones; and [Gemstones of the World](#) by Schumann



HUMOROUS HELPFUL HINTS.... Author Unknown

Don't try to cut and polish cabs while watching T.V...
Always walk uphill while collecting large specimens...
Tin Oxide will not work as well in your coffee as Cre-mora®...

Most worthwhile gemstones can be dug only during a rain or snow storm...

All worthwhile gemstones are a good 500 miles away at the end of a dirt road at an elevation of at least 8,000 feet...

If you can't identify a mineral, call it jasper, no one else will know either.

Source: [Canaveral Moonstone](#), 4/2010; via [The Mountain Gem](#), 1/2010.

Safety Note for Spring

By Owen Martin, AFMS Safety Chair

Take your Benadryl with you!

Well, it was a hard winter by most standards in the central and south and eastern U.S. It even snowed three times at our house in Houston and froze hard enough to break pipes in several houses in our neighborhood. Not that I'm complaining - after all we get PLENTY of summer for 6+ months every year. With that being said the cold weather really backed up the spring bloom and as a result EVERYTHING started blooming last week!

So my Bradford pears, dog wood, peach and red buds are in full bloom. Weeds are taking over the hibernating grass and have tons of little flowers, my pine is pollinating and so are some oaks and maples across the street. AND to top it all off Cedar keeps blowing in from Hill Country.

Now the weather was just perfect this weekend so I figured it was time to get out and at least do some yard

work - about 8 hours worth. This was after a land-clearing project in Hill Country from the previous weekend. As a result of proximity and increased respiratory activity I did myself in. All those allergens caught up with me and just about knocked me out. It wasn't exactly an asthma attack, but my eyes were swollen, my nasal passages were swollen up so that I couldn't breathe except out of my mouth, and I kept coughing up crud!

OK, so the moral of the story is that I should have taken Benadryl® prior to engaging in such activities. Not to say that I wouldn't have had some impact from all that pollen, but at least I could have mitigated the violent response my body had to it all. Luckily, I was able to nurse my bloated head on the couch while watching conference basketball tournaments.

However, if I was in the field and had such a problem, especially one that could have led to an asthma attack, then I would have been in trouble. Keep that in mind as you head out on your first hunt of this spring!

Prepare, be safe and breathe easy!!!