

ATHENS ROCK AND GEM CLUB

ATHENS, GA DOPS AND DIGS MAY 2026

May Meeting

*****Warning*****

If you were not at the last meeting and we do not have your email address **this will be your last newsletter unless you update it with Kallie or Casey. Our email addresses are on the last page of this newsletter.**

This month we will have a presentation on Mineral Adventures - These 7 Abandoned Gem Mines are Now open to the public. Jim will update us on a potential trip to Mason Mountain and Kallie will give us the run down on the GMS Mother's Day show along with some important news from GMS.



May Birthdays

James Strickler 25th

Sean Price 25th

Sara Kate Downs 26th

John Gogliano 29th

April Meeting

A big thank you to Kim Cochran for driving in and giving us a mineral quiz and extensive education in the process. If you've never been to a Kim presentation you are missing out.

Our next regular meeting will be May 19th. We meet at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 800 Westlake Drive, Athens GA 30606.

From Broad Street, turn south onto Alps Road. One block south of Colonial Promenade (a.k.a. Beechwood) just past Alps Road Elementary on the left. The room we meet in is down the hall to the right.

The business part of the meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. The educational program begins at about 8:00 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend the business meeting, but some may prefer to attend only the educational program.

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DMC Field Trip Sharing Program

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc



The Friendly Federation - Founded in 1976 to serve

www.southeastfed.org

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An Official Field Trip of Kanawha Rock & Gem Club (Charleston, WV) (HOST)

Saturday, May 23, 2026

Meet at 10 a.m. Eastern Time

Collecting 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mason County, KY

Limit 35 People

Registration Required (Link is below)

Fee: None

TRIP: This trip is to Northern Kentucky to collect Ordovician fossils. The location is about an hour outside of Cincinnati. This site is known for its large deposits of Ordovician fossils including, but not limited to, bryozoans, several species of brachiopods, gastropods, rugose “horn” corals, crinoids, occasional trilobites and more. This trip will include visits to 2 collection sites.

COLLECTING: The first site is a large road cut with a variety of fossils. 4 lane highway but lots of room on the berms. No climbing, but you can walk up and along the ledges. The second site involves a road cut near a busy road. With a hillside. A handout depicting specimens will be available at the meeting place.

BRING:

- Wear long pants and boots or closed-toe shoes that you don't mind getting muddy in case of rain. No shorts, sandals, flip flops, etc. A hat is a good idea. Make sure you have clean shoes to drive or ride home in (a garbage bag is great to put your muddy boots/shoes in for the trip home.) You might want gloves.
- Bring water, snacks, sunscreen, bug spray (for mosquitoes and TICKS), sunglasses, and a rock hammer (if you have one) or hammer and screwdriver. A walking stick may be helpful. Bright colored clothing or a vest is recommended.
- Bring several Ziploc baggies for your finds; film canisters or pill bottles are good for very small or fragile finds. It's helpful to have a box or plastic bucket in the car to put these smaller contains in as you move between sites. You can use a sling-type bag to contain your finds “in the field” (any type of crossbody bag will do – canvas bag, purse, etc.)
- You may want to have a jug of water to wash off muddy/dusty finds.

TERRAIN/SPECIAL CONDITIONS: Loose shale on a road cut bench with higher benches accessible from the road cut and end up a steep hill.

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REGISTRATION: Click [here](#) to fill out a registration form. If you register and are unable to attend the trip, **please be considerate** to your fellow rockhounds and let us know as soon as possible so someone on a potential waiting list can take your slot(s).

CHILDREN (Maybe): All children must be at least 12 years old and under adult supervision at all times due to the busy highway nearby.

PETS (No): Not recommended due to busy highway nearby and rough rocky terrain at the collecting site.

FACILITIES: No restrooms or other facilities at collecting site. Many options available approximately 20 minutes from the site.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: We will be taking small groups at a time to the second site due to limited parking availability.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Maysville, KY has several hotels and Airbnb's available.

DIRECTIONS AND WHERE TO MEET: Registered participants will be sent a confirmation email with directions and meeting place details.

CARPOOLING: The registration form has a place for you to indicate if you **need** a ride; if you can **offer** a ride; or if you would like to **drive or share** a carpool ride. If you choose any of these options, your name, email address, and club name will be shared with other members who also choose one of the options. Then, you can communicate with one another to arrange carpools. **CONTACT:** Brent Williams 217-741-0181 or bwilliams630@comcast.net

IMPORTANT: DMC field trips are open only to members of clubs in the SFMS DMC field trip sharing program. SFMS DMC club members are covered by liability insurance and they are bound by the AFMS code of ethics (click [here](#) to read them), but the general public is not and could jeopardize access to a collecting location. **Please do not post DMC field trip information where the general public can access it.**

[Click here for DMC Field Trip Attendance Policies](#)

[Click here for the DMC Field Trip Schedule](#)



DMC Field Trip Sharing Program

The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc



The Friendly Federation - Founded in 1976 to serve

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An Official Field Trip of the Lowcountry Gem and Mineral Society (Charleston, SC)

Saturday, June 13, 2026

Meet at 10 a.m. Eastern Time

Tour is 11:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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Morris Island, SC

Limit 30 People

Registration Required (Link is below)

Fee: \$65 per person

TRIP: Hop aboard for a family-friendly adventure that takes you straight to the sandy shores of a wild barrier island. This tour is part boat cruise, part beach day—and all fun. Naturalists and captains will guide you through a salt marsh and Charleston Harbor, sharing stories of the Lowcountry along the way. Keep your eyes peeled for bottlenose dolphins, brown pelicans, and (in summer!) gentle manatees as we cruise past iconic sights like the Ravenel Bridge, downtown Charleston, and Fort Sumter. Once we arrive on Morris Island, you'll have plenty of time to explore, hunt for fossils and shells with a tour guide, or just relax on the beach with a picnic and good company. This tour is a summer favorite—laid-back, scenic, and perfect for all ages.

COLLECTING: Beachcombing for sharks' teeth, shells, and fossils. We will also have a naturalist joining us to tell us all about the area and any of our finds.

BRING: Drinking water, sunscreen, insect repellent, snacks/bagged lunch.

Shoes that you don't mind getting wet (Teva style shoes are best), a hat, and synthetic clothing (it will dry faster than cotton). Swimsuits optional! Also be sure to bring some containers for your treasures!

REQUIREMENTS: All trip participants must fill out an online waiver for the tour company or you will not be allowed on the boat. The link will be in the registration confirmation email.

TERRAIN/SPECIAL CONDITIONS: We will be on the boat and beachcombing, so the terrain is relatively flat, but unfortunately not conducive to wheelchairs or strollers.

FEE: \$65 per person

REGISTRATION: Click [here](#) to fill out a registration form. If you register and are unable to attend the trip, **please be considerate** to your fellow rockhounds and let us know as soon as possible so someone on a potential waiting list can take your slot(s).

CHILDREN (Yes): There is no official age limit for this trip, but we will be on the boat and beach for most of the day with no facilities and adult supervision will be required at all times.

PETS (No): Pets are not allowed.

FACILITIES: There are no bathrooms or shelters on the island.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: If you are traveling into Charleston for this trip and are looking for a place that is close, try lodging in Mt. Pleasant or Charleston. Since it is the summer, unfortunately this can get a little pricey, but if you are okay with a bit of a drive, North Charleston will have some less costly options and you can be at the meeting site in about 20-25 minutes.

DIRECTIONS AND WHERE TO MEET: Registered participants will be sent a confirmation email with directions and meeting place details.

CARPOOLING: The registration form has a place for you to indicate if you **need** a ride; if you can **offer** a ride; or if you would like to **drive or share** a carpool ride. If you choose any of these options, your **name**, **email address**, and **club name** will be shared with other members who also choose one of the options. Then, you can communicate

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with one another to arrange carpools.

CONTACT: Olivia Cramer 843-247-3414 olivia.ruxton@gmail.com

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[Click here for DMC Field Trip Attendance Policies](#)

[Click here for the DMC Field Trip Schedule](#)

Clubs scheduled to host DMC Field Trips in the next 6 months

2026

July - High Country Gem and Mineral Society (Hendersonville, NC)

August - Gem & Mineral Society of Franklin NC

September - Montgomery Gem and Mineral Society (Montgomery, AL)

October - Northeast Georgia Mineral Society (Clarkesville, GA)

November - Upper Abbeville Gem & Mineral Club (Due West, SC)

December - Rome Georgia Mineral Society (Rome, GA)

DMC Coordinator: Lori Carter

Email: dmc@southeastfed.org

Website: <https://www.southeastfed.org/sfms-field-trips/dmc-field-trip-program>

DMC is a program of the Field Trip Committee of the Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.

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"Earth first...we'll collect on the other planets later."

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The SFMS is celebrating its 50th anniversary and our Nation's 250th Anniversary. To commemorate this, we want to create a SFMS T-Shirt. We're going to give our members the chance to come up with the logo design. First, we'll have a logo design contest, picking a winner for a free Scholarship to a SFMS Federation week, including a free T-Shirt of the winning design. After that we'll start awarding yearly Scholarships based on proceeds from T-Shirt sales. So, the more we sell, the more scholarships we can give out.

Design contest rules:

- Email submissions to president@southeastfed.org
 - Capture the essence of the SFMS, use your imagination.
 - Beautiful designs can be Black and White, gray scale, or in Vibrant colors.
 - Image size needs to be Large enough to create a clean logo design without pixelation.
 - Can be any shape or style.
- Front pocket design would be nice,

but not necessary.

- Must list who we are, "Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies".
- Must list that this is the, "50th Anniversary 1976 – 2026", somewhere in the design
- You can submit as many different logo designs as you want.
- Image format can be BMP, JPG, GIF, TIF, PowerPoint, MS Word, or PDF.
- Deadline for submissions is June 20th.

Logo design ideas: Gems, Minerals, Fossils, Lapidary creations, Maps or outlines of SFMS states and

Boundaries that make up the SFMS, Interesting logo shape ideas and designs. What will people want to see as a design representing the SFMS? Unity of individual clubs that support and make up the SFMS. Preserving and growing Gem and Mineral Societies. Map Showing a Pinpoint of every club in the SFMS. The top 5 winning designs will be selected by the SFMS board and will be announced in the July Lodestar along with an order form for T-Shirt sales. Opportunities like these can help bring your organizations closer together. Please pass this message about this contest to all members of every SFMS Member Club; the goal is to be as extensive and inclusive as possible for this opportunity!!!

Moving forward, I want to meet you at the next SFMS Meeting. The SFMS State Director for each SFMS member state and the president of every SFMS Member club should attend every meeting of the SFMS. If the president of your club can't attend, the president can send an appointed liaison in their absence. Right now, we're planning a summer meeting in Helen, GA. Dates and host hotel information will be announced on the website within the next week or two.

Wild Acre's SFMS Week August 10-16

The Website is almost ready for registrations. All the classes are listed so be sure and read about them. August.

- " Federation Week" SFMS Wildacres - 10th-16th
- All About Titanium
- Bead Weaving Ropes

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-Capturing the Beauty of Nature in Metal Clay

-Let the Light Shine Through

-Natural Dyeing

-Soft Soldering

-Special Projects

September "Federation Week" SFMS

Wildacres,

- 7th-13th

-Fun with Leather Crafting

Sandcasting with Upcycled Metals

-Scrimshaw

-Silver Filigree

-Southwest Handstamped Metal & Leather Bracelet

-Trash to Treasure

-Woolly Week, An Introduction to Wool Fiber Arts

www.sfmsworkshops.org, for info. With the price of Silver exploding almost up to \$100 spot price, we are offering a wide selection of classes for you to explore. The classes offered will enhance the lapidary skills you already have learned, and our classes are great for beginners too. We look forward to seeing you on the mountain at Wildacres Retreat.

The Eastern Federation has their "Federation Week"

May 11th-17th

-Wire Wrapping

-Viking Knit

-Cabochons

-Inlay

-Fused glass

-PMC Silver

-Faceting

* plus enjoy the Speaker-n-Residence Robert

Weldon. He is one of the world's most prominent Gem & Jewelry photographers and respected journalists with over 35 years in the trade"

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All Federations are welcome to join in on the fun at

Wildacres SFMS Federation Week

In case you did not know the American Federation

has 7 Regional Federations under their umbrella.

-NFMS. Northwest Federation

-CFMS. California Federation

-RMFMS. Rocky Mountain Federation

-MWF. Midwest Federation

-SCFMS. Southcentral Federation

-EFMS. Eastern Federation

-SFMS. Southeast Federation

* All Regional Federation members are invited to the

SFMS Federation Week at Wildacres

Retreat. There seems to be some confusion about Federation Week being

advertised by WH School. This advertised Federation Week has nothing

to do with the Southeast Federation

Workshops. The only "Federation Week"

Sanctioned Workshops will be held at

Wildacres Retreat in Little Switzerland,

NC hosted by the Southeast Federation

in August and September.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

We are happy to announce lower prices at

Federation Week at Wildacres. Check it

out! Feel free to reach out with any

questions Regarding SFMS "Federation Week" Workshops

Lisa Roberts

Education Chair

antleycreations@yahoo.com

423-494-7096

William Holland SFMS Week June 5-12

We have some exciting news.

Because Federation Week has been so well loved over the years, we decided to

expand it. This year we are welcoming

members from **all seven federation**

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regions to attend together at William Holland.

If you are part of a gem, mineral, or lapidary club, this week was made for you.

More than a normal class week, it feels like a gathering. People arrive not knowing anyone and leave with rockhound friends from all over the country. Breakfast conversations turn into specimen comparisons. Evenings turn into stories about field trips, favorite finds, and tool advice you did not know you needed.

We are planning social activities throughout the week including relaxed evening gatherings, trivia style games, and time set aside just to enjoy being around others who share the same hobby.

Early Bird Tuition

Enroll by **April 30** and receive an automatic **\$50 off tuition**.

We also want to support the clubs that keep the hobby alive. For every member who attends, donations will be made to participating organizations. Think of it as coming to class while helping us give back to the gem societies you care about.

Choose from 17 instructors

- Chain Maille with Theresa Chivers
- Soft Soldering with Jodi Miller
- Stained Glass I with Stephanie Danz
- Enameling I/II with Jan March & Vickie Prillaman
- Silver I with Shelley Curran
- Mineral Identification (15+) with Mike Harrison
- Faceting I with Keith Harrigill
- Junior Jewelers (Ages 10–17) with Debbie Gates
- Twisted Lapidary with Chuck

- Opals: All-in-One with Jeff Hunter
- Wire I with Judi Wild
- Silver II: Frame It! with Debra Cobia
- Gem Trees I/II with Jerri Heer
- Intarsia I/II with Bill Boggs
- Cabochons Combo with Rick Marshall
- Mint Condition Rings with John Wild
- Knife Stone Inlay with Steve Miller

You can attend with your club and take different classes during the day, then reconnect each evening to compare projects and discoveries.

What's new this year

- Registration is now available directly on our website
- All federations are invited to attend together
- Special social activities planned throughout the week, with more details to come

This is one of the most enjoyable weeks of the year and it tends to fill quickly. Do not wait to make plans with your club.

If you are not yet a member of a club, reach out to Rick Marshall at rickmarshall24@icloud.com for more information.

View class details and register here:

<https://lapidaryschool.org/register/>

We hope to see your club here this June.

William Holland School of Lapidary Arts

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The Athens Rock and Gem Club is a non-profit organization. Its objective and purpose is "to promote the recreational, educational, and scientific aspects of lapidary arts, rock and mineral collecting, and earth sciences, for adults and children".

Meetings are held the third Tuesday of the month, excluding July and August. Locations of the December (Christmas party) and June (picnic) meetings are announced.

We meet at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 800 Westlake Drive, Athens Ga 30606. From Broad Street, turn south onto Alps Road. One block south of Colonial Promenade (a.k.a. Beechwood) just past Alps Road Elementary on the left. The room we meet in is on the left side of the church. The business part of the meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. The educational program begins at about 8:00 p.m. Members are encouraged to attend the business meeting, but some may prefer to attend only the educational program.

Annual dues are \$15.00 (single adult) and \$17.50 (family of two); \$25.00 (family of three or more). Dues are due by the October meeting of each year. Checks should be made out to the Treasurer, Casey Gordon, with "Athens Rock and Gem Club" in the memo line (this is temporary, due to an officer change). If a family membership, provide the names of all individuals in the family who will take part in any club activities.

THE ATHENS ROCK AND GEM CLUB

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date: _____

Name: _____

Spouse's name: _____

Address: _____

Children's names: _____

Ages, Schools: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email Addresses: _____

Occupations, hobbies, interests: _____

Birthdays/ Anniversary (optional) _____

Please circle one:

Annual Dues: Single - \$15.00 Family of Two - \$17.50 Family greater than Two - \$20.00

Renewal Dues Single - \$15.00 Family of Two - \$17.50 Family greater than Two - \$20.00

Make check payable to: Athens Rock and Gem Club

Send to: Casey Gordon, Treasurer, ARGC, 135 Curtis Drive, Athens, GA 30605

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Please Deliver To:



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Website: www.athensrockandgemclub.org