

J A N U A R Y 2 0 1 6

# Slabs & Cabs

Official Newsletter of the Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society

## President's Message

### 2016 Board

President

*Russell Wheeler*

[President@GCGMS.org](mailto:President@GCGMS.org)

Vice-President

*Wendy Crook-Abel*

[VicePresident@GCGMS.org](mailto:VicePresident@GCGMS.org)

Past President

*Jerrold Simpson*

[PastPresident@GCGMS.org](mailto:PastPresident@GCGMS.org)

Secretary / Newsletter

*Janelle Villareal*

[Secretary@GCGCM.org](mailto:Secretary@GCGCM.org)

Treasurer

*Gilbert Trejo*

[Treasurer@GCGMS.org](mailto:Treasurer@GCGMS.org)

Education / Show Publicity/Librarian

*Linda Simpson*

[Education@GCGMS.org](mailto:Education@GCGMS.org)

Show/Dealer Chair

*Jerrold Simpson*

[President@GCGMS.org](mailto:President@GCGMS.org)

Shop Coordinator

*Mark Wolbrink*

[Workshop@GCGMS.org](mailto:Workshop@GCGMS.org)

Membership/Publicity Chair

*Gene Schade*

[Membership@GCGMS.org](mailto:Membership@GCGMS.org)

Field Trip Coordinator

*Melanie Hollenshead*

[FieldTrip@GCGMS.org](mailto:FieldTrip@GCGMS.org)

I'd like to wish everyone a happy and blessed new year. Hopefully everyone shared a wonderful holiday with family and loved ones, and I hope the 2016 will prove to be a year filled with lots of opportunity and excitement.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our nominating committee and the club membership for allowing me to serve as our president of the club. I hope to carry on the torch of our past leaders, and also hope to create some new facets of our club, which will provide more opportunities to learn and practice our hobbies. I'd also like to thank our board members and committee chair persons for their services and time they provide to benefit the society. The Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society would not continue to exist if it were not for these persons who volunteer their precious time towards the tasks necessary to keep the club running. I extend a challenge to those who have not served as a chair person yet, to find a little spare time to volunteer.

Speaking of volunteers, the 54<sup>th</sup> annual Gem and Mineral is coming up in March and we always need the help of our membership to assist with many tasks associated with the show. The show has become a yearly standard of our society and continues to get better each year with the help of our committee, membership, and dealers who create the wonderful gathering of rocks, gems, minerals, fossils, and jewelry. As always we will have the committee sign-up sheets at our January 21<sup>st</sup> general meeting for people to volunteer.

In the spirit of a new year, I'd like to start a new fun event for us. Similar to the best-colored outfit contest, we're going to change it up a little and have a contest for the best specimen. You'll find details about the specimen contest on the next page along with information about our January meeting. Please come and share in fellowship with us.

*Russell Wheeler*

# January Meeting

Our general meeting will be held at the bridge club building at 4234 Weber on Thursday January, 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30pm. Russell Wheeler will present the program of a review of the 2015 Denver Gem and Mineral Show. Since January is the month of Aquamarine, bring your favorite "BLUE" specimen. We will judge the field and award the winner with a special prize for the best specimen. Remember, it can be any rock, gem, mineral or fossil specimen with Blue hues.



## January **BLUE** Specimen Contest

Bring your favorite "BLUE" hued rock, mineral, gem, or fossil specimen to be judged with others. It can be any specimen as long as it is any shade of blue. The specimens will be judged on visual aesthetics, and the winner will be presented a special prize and will be featured in the next monthly newsletter.

Sponsored by Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society

## Paradise (s) at the Lapidary Shop

Sawyer Paradise was home from college over the Christmas holidays. Sawyer attends school in Oregon and will be graduating this spring. He and his brother Hunter spent a couple of those days at the lapidary shop. They were accompanied by their mother, Patsy and father Chuck on different days. It was great to see this family. They are members of the Society and always willing to help out when they can.

Hunter, who is attending a local college, has been making cabochons since he was eleven years old. He is still very good at it. Sawyer hasn't been quite so active with cabochons but you can tell by the attached photos that he is still very good also.

Thanks to the Paradise family for spending their time together at the lapidary shop.

*Jerrold Simpson*



Linda Simpson, Patsy Paradise, and Patsy's parents at the Lapidary Shop.





Sawyer Paradise working on a cabochon.



Sawyer polishing a wolf's head.



Hunter Paradise working on a cabochon.

# The Gem and Mineral Show is Coming and All That's Needed is You!

Our annual show will be held on March 5 and 6, 2016 at the Richard Borchard Regional Fairgrounds in Robstown. The show takes a tremendous amount of planning and effort each year. The work on the next year's show starts as soon as the previous year's show has been packed away. The show is the way GCGMS can spread the news about what we do as a society and encourage others to become interested in gem and mineral related activities. But, the show is also a whole weekend of fun, especially when you get involved!

We want our show to be better and better every year! And to do that – WE NEED YOU!!!! As Vice-President, I would like to challenge all 145 members out there to contribute to the show in some way. Here are some ways you can join in on the fun.

**Display Cases** – Displays are a great way to showcase your collections or your talents. Remember how much fun show and tell was in elementary school? This is show and tell to hundreds of people and you don't have to do any public speaking! I have belonged to a gem and mineral society for almost ten years and I did my first display case only last year. I have to admit I was a little intimidated about setting one up. Maybe you feel the same way? We will be having a program in February on how to set up a display case. Come and ask questions. I was happy with my case and it made me want to do another one. I hope some of you will join the ranks of setting up your first display case!

**Cabochon Contest** – Speaking of display cases, one display case this year will be dedicated to a contest showcasing cabochons made by our members. Each member may enter one cabochon that they have made themselves. The cabochons will be judged by an expert on workmanship. Ribbons will be awarded. So get to making that one lovely cabochon to enter!! We want a full case so we need lots of entries!

**Demonstrations** – This year we are going to have a table set up dedicated to having demonstrations of activities related to our club. We will be demonstrating things such as cabochon making, silversmithing, and wirework. The demonstrations will be scheduled but informal, with artisans from the club working in these areas for people to watch and ask questions. Please email me at [VicePresident@GCGSM.org](mailto:VicePresident@GCGSM.org) if you would like to sign-up.

**Work at the Show** - We need volunteers to do the usual jobs at the show – set up, take down, ticket sales, manning the membership table, and working at the Kids Wheel and touch table. Sign-up sheets will be at the meetings in January and February. Working at the show is a great way to get to know some of your fellow members and doesn't require a large amount of time.

**Attend with a Friend** – Come to the show and bring a friend with you to introduce them to the world of gems and minerals!

**Sell Tickets** – If you buy a set of pre-sale tickets, you get a set of complimentary tickets to go with them. You could give one complimentary ticket with each ticket sold or commit some random acts of kindness by giving out the complimentary tickets. Maybe encourage a young person who has an interest in science or jewelry making.

I hope you will take up my challenge and find some way to contribute to the show this year. Our show can continue to grow with the contributions from ALL of our members!

Wendy Crook-Abel, Vice-President

## Lapidary Shop Rules

1. The lapidary shop equipment may not be used by anyone who has not signed a liability waiver.
2. Shop equipment use flat fee is \$2.00 per hour. Sign in on arrival. Pay Supervisor and sign out before leaving the shop.
3. "Open shop" hours are to be used only by those who have taken the cabochon class or have shown proficiency on the equipment.
4. All children under the age of 17 must be accompanied by an adult trained on the use of the equipment.
5. Supervisor must inspect rock "set-up" prior to anyone starting slab saw.
6. Long hair should be tied back, loose sleeve should be secured, and safety procedures followed.
7. Safety glasses are recommended and are the responsibility of the individual. Some are furnished by the GCGMS, or you may bring your own.
8. The last person to use a piece of equipment before the shop closes is responsible for cleaning that piece of equipment and the work area. This may include tabletop, sponges, aprons, catch trays, etc.
9. Shop Supervisor is the final authority on shop rules and usage.

*Revised May 2009*

## Lapidary Shop Key Masters

Lapidary Shop key masters are:

Shop Supervisor:

Mark Wolbrink 361-442-6915

Jerrold Simpson 361-851-8788 or

Cell - 361-877-3073

Hank Swan 361-993-9861 or

361-857-2405

Please call one of these when you would like to use the shop. They will not all be available at the same time, and once

in a while none of them will be available. But, most of the time at least one of them should be able to work out a time and date the shop could be open for you. Remember the club has a lot of good equipment to use!

The shop is open on Monday evenings from 6:00 pm to 9:00pm. The shop is also open by appointment on Saturday mornings. Please call a key master to see if the shop may be opened for use.

# Board Meeting Minutes, January 7, 2016

The GCGMS Board meeting for 01 / 07/16 was called to order by past President Jerrold Simpson at 6:42 PM. The current President, Russell Wheeler was unable to attend. The meeting was held at the Society Lapidary Shop.

Those in Attendance: Jerrold Simpson, Linda Simpson, Wendy Crook-Abel, Gilbert Trejo, Gene Schade, Mark Wolbrink, Janelle Villarreal and Abel Villarreal.

## Treasurer's Report

Gilbert Trejo gave the Treasurer's Report for December. Mark Wolbrink made a motion to accept the treasurer's report and Linda Simpson seconded it. All voted aye.

## Membership Report

Gene Schade gave the Membership Report. There are currently 115 adult, 22 junior, and 8 honorary members. Members are counted from 2015 until the end of March, when 2016 membership fees are due. Gene conducted a drawing for a prize, which he had donated, for all members who had paid membership fees by December 2015. The prize was a polished opal rock egg and was won by Janelle Villareal.

## Secretary's Report

Wendy Crook-Abel gave the secretary's report. The General Meeting in December was the Christmas Party and there were no minutes taken at that time. The last Board Meeting minutes were passed and accepted. Gilbert Trejo made the motion and Linda Simpson seconded it. All voted aye.

## Shop Report

Mark Wolbrink gave the shop report. He reported that two trim saws have been cleaned up, repaired and are now working. He reported that a third trim saw is still being repaired. All trim saws will be using only water-based lubricant. Some old equipment has been sold for \$35.

## Rock Show Report

Jerrold Simpson gave the Show Report. Joe Grimes will be helping the setting up. There are 25 dealers who have paid for the show. A floor plan is currently being worked out for improving space and time efficiency at the show. He reported that Bill and Lois are no longer going to be doing the "Rock Food Table", but that the rocks are available for the Show for a fee of \$200.00. After open discussion by Board members, Gilbert Trejo made the motion to get the Food Table Rocks fee paid, and that the club membership be responsible for the display. The motion was seconded by Mark Wolbrink and passed by a majority.

## Education Report

Linda Simpson gave the Education Report. Linda reported that she and Jerrold presented to 173 Calallen High School chemistry students on January the 6th. The presentation was "Don't Judge a Rock by It's Cover". There are plans for a presentation next week for the Early Childhood classes at the Montessori School. Later this month there will be another presentation at Martin Middle School.

## Old Business

Linda Simpson stated that she has Rock Show presale and Complimentary Ticket packets are available. Also Rock Show cards available for distribution.

## New Business

There was no new official business brought up.

Gene Schade made the motion to adjourn at 8:00 PM and Mark Wolbrink seconded it. All voted aye.

Respectfully submitted by  
Janelle Villarreal, Secretary

## McMULLEN COUNTY WOOD

Driving down the country road with the top down,  
hanging over the door and going real slow.

Searching for the mother lode, but it won't be real gold,  
looking for McMullen County wood, something real old.

Stop! She yelled, you went too far, back up real slow,  
There I saw it, something worthy of display in our show.

Then I saw it, something rather small, a "rounder"  
wasn't too large, only about a hundred pounder!

Twenty minutes later, after rolling it up a hill,  
Thinking I should have left it where it lay so still.

I finally got it to the car and into the trunk,  
and off we went home to add it to our other "good" junk.

Our first piece of coveted McMullen County wood,  
after driving so far it made us feel real good.

Years later and after many trips to the Brisco ranch,  
collecting that coveted wood,  
figuring out how to get rid of that ugly piece would make us feel so  
good.

Jerrold Simpson

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## Simpson's Safety Stuff

I wrote this poem about a piece Linda and I found in McMullen county several years ago. (We still have it by the way). I mentioned it was a "hundred pounder". It wasn't quite that large but felt like it. I did roll it over a small hill, into the road. I lifted one edge up on the bumper of the car and then rolled it into the trunk. We were driving a small car and the rock was large enough to make the car noticeable lower. The piece was too heavy for me to lift off the ground by myself.

This brings me to one point of this article. Do not try to pick up a piece that is too large for one person to handle when you are by yourself. It is pretty obvious as to why you should not do this. A person can pull a muscle, have the rock fall back and break an arm, leg or foot or any combination of these. You may not be alone at the collecting site; however the others may be too far away to help you load the item. Normally the collecting sites are a long way from



## Simpson's Safety Stuff (Con't)

from emergency help and you would be stranded and suffering needlessly.

Be sure you have the proper tools. I once observed several adult men attempting to remove Llanite from a roadside outcrop. This site is a few miles north of Llano, TX. They had picks, shovels, pry bars and hammers. The elderly rock hound with the brand new, 6' steel pry bar broke it and went stumbling backwards. Fortunately he did not fall on the rocks or into the highway. The point? Know your limits and the limits of your equipment. Use caution where you are collecting. The spot mentioned is on a two-lane highway and depending on the time of day, traffic can be heavy. The site is also just over the crest of a hill in the southbound lane. Most of the good, easy Llanite to collect is already gone.

Do not overload your vehicle. Linda and I used to own a Toyota Corolla. Our first collecting trip to west central Texas included the site mentioned in the above paragraph. At this time we were about in the middle of our trip. We collected several medium sized pieces and a bucket of small pieces. We stopped at several fossil sites on the way back to Corpus. By the time we arrived home, the rear wheel openings were so far down that you could not see the top of the tires. All you could see was the rims at the top! A little overloaded? Yes and we were very lucky to have gotten home without an accident or blow out which could have caused an accident. Needless to say our gas mileage was not so good on the way home. We have an SUV not so it is harder to overload even though we have tried a time or two.

Texas is full of collecting sites that have a lot of perils. You can prepare for those perils however if you give it a little thought. Wear those snake boots or leg covers. I have seen several large rattlesnakes while collecting. Wear that long sleeve shirt. Those cacti and mesquite saplings have thorns, as do other plants. Wear long pants, preferable heavy jeans for

the same reason as above and in case you need to kneel down or fall down. Also the long sleeve shirts and jeans will protect you from the sun. Wear a large brim hat or a hat that will cover your ears and protect your face. Baseball caps have a 2 SPF rating so give it up for a couple of hours while collecting. Wear that sun block. Yeah, I know it is not manly or macho/macha (women included) to wear funny looking caps and cover up, but you can pay for it later when they are cutting those melanomas off your face, arms and back. I have been lucky so far and have not had one on my face. However, a friend who did have one cut off his face, looked at my arm and said you better have that cut off. He was right and I take precautions and see the skin doctor every three months.

Does it sound like everything I write in these safety articles are from personal experience? A large number of them are. For an educated person, I have done some really stupid and unsafe things from time to time. We pretty much all have. Maybe these articles can help someone avoid being injured or doing things in an unsafe way. I hope so.

If you have any items that might need to be included in this column, please let me know. I will include them and give you credit for the information. My contact information is on the web site [www.gcgms.org](http://www.gcgms.org). Better yet, you can write it and contribute to the newsletter.

If you forget everything else in the article, take plenty of non-perishable food and plenty of water when you rock hunt, wherever you rock hunt.

Happy and safe rock and fossil and artifact hunting and collecting for 2016!

Jerrold Simpson

## Local Happenings

**January 22-24—TYLER, TEXAS:** Wholesale and retail show; East Texas Gem & Mineral Society, Tyler Rose Center; 420 Rose Park Drive; Fri. 9-5, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; \$5 Admission, Students/Children \$1; The 19th annual show will feature the rock food table, lapidary & equipment sales; fossils, minerals, jewelry and cut and uncut stones. There is a large variety of dealers, activities and displays, along with the popular wheel of fortune booth and a silent auction table. School day is Friday with several educational demonstrations but is also open to the public. ; contact Keith Harmon, Hwy 84 West, Rusk, TX 75785, 903 316-2967; e-mail: [whizgnat@netzero.net](mailto:whizgnat@netzero.net)

**January 29-1 February 4—TUCSON, ARIZONA:** Wholesale and retail show; AS Shows, Kino Sports Complex; 2500 E Ajo Way; Daily 10-6; Free Admission; A world class collection of vendors.; contact Jim Gehring, 2003 Viscount Row, Orlando, FL 32809; e-mail: [Jim@as-shows.com](mailto:Jim@as-shows.com); Web site: [KionGemShow.com](http://KionGemShow.com)

**February 20-21—LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO:** Annual show; Friends of the Museum, NM Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum; 4100 Dripping Springs; Sat. 9-5, Sun. 10-5; \$5 Admission, Children under 5 Free ; The admission also includes entrance to all current exhibits and to the grounds of the museum. There will be educational displays, jewelry repair, appraisals, children's activities and food vendors selling a nice variety of items for a snack or lunch. Gems and Minerals from Tasmania, Australia is returning for his second year. We are honored to have vendors come from near and far. Examples are Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Texas, Oregon and of course from all over our great state of New Mexico and our neighbors from Texas too.; contact Diane McMellen, 250 Cotorro Ct., Las Cruces, NM 88011, 575-522-1232; e-mail: [diane@lascruceseventplanning.com](mailto:diane@lascruceseventplanning.com) ; Web site: [www.lcmuseumrocks.com](http://www.lcmuseumrocks.com)

**February 20-21—GEORGETOWN, TEXAS:** Annual show; Williamson County Gem and Mineral Society, Community Center- San Gabriel Park; 445 East Morrow Street, P O Box 82472; Sat. 10 am-6 pm, Sun. 10 am-5 pm; Adults + Seniors \$3.00, Students/Youth 6-12- \$2.00, Children under 6-Free!; Rollin Rock Club Meeting Sunday Feb 21,2016 9 A.M. We will have a food concession the whole shiw; contact Bill Medford, Georgetown, TX 78628, (512) 930-2768; Web site: [wcgms.org](http://wcgms.org)

**February 20-21—PLAINVIEW, TEXAS:** Annual show; Hi Plains Gem & Mineral Society, Ollie Liner Center; Buisness I-27 South; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; Adults \$3, Student/Children \$1; contact Charles Mooney, (806)-292-8359; e-mail: [Charlesmooney@gmail.com](mailto:Charlesmooney@gmail.com)

**February 27-27—LLANO, TEXAS:** Show; Friends of the Llano Red Top Jail, Llano County Community Center; 2249 Ranch Road 152; Sat. 8-6; Free Admission; This fun, educational and free public event is for Prospectors, Rockhounds, Treasure Hunters, and Metal Detecting enthusiasts to get together, to share ideas and experiences. Gold panning, metal detector and rockhound demo's and lessons.; contact Frank Rowell, 805 Berry St., Llano , TX 78643, 1-325-248-1067; e-mail: [frank@enchantedrocksandjewelry.com](mailto:frank@enchantedrocksandjewelry.com)

**March 11-13—SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS:** Annual show; Exhibit Group International, Embassy Suite Hotel; 7750 Briaridge Drive; Fri. 11-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; \$3 Admission ; Large gem stone beads, jade jewelry, fine jewelry, sterling silver jewelry, beads supply, pewter finding, accessory gift a lot more, beads class available.; contact john su, 13337 SOUTH ST#633, cerritos, CA 90703, 2146631740; e-mail: [egi168@hotmail.com](mailto:egi168@hotmail.com); Web site: [www.egishows.com](http://www.egishows.com)