Snoopy Gems

Volume 52 Number 4 April 2026
Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem &
Mineral Society Inc.

Email: mgcgms@bellsouth.net

MGCGMS Established in 1974

Message from the President

Dear Members,

Easter has come and gone. I hope you all had a joyous and blessed time with family. This week has been spring break on the coast. Lots of kids out celebrating a week off. We finally got some rain and the weather can't make up its mind either to be cold or hot and humid. Welcome to the south in the spring.

Our club has been asked to sponsor a table for the Earth Day festivities on April 18th here at the Mary C from 10 AM to 2:30 PM. We will have one children's table making stretch bracelets. I have a couple of volunteers to help me with the table, but I would like to have a person or two promoting the club and handing out club information. Let me know if you can help.

Stephanie Hatcher
MGCGMS President

Workshops:

Our Wednesday classes from 11-4:00 in our room at the Mary C. All members are welcome!

Saturday 4/11/2026 Stephanie Hatcher is teaching a beaded wire wrapped pendant. She will have kits for the class Saturday for $10.

Materials:
25mm round cab
20 gauge wire
28 gauge wire
4 mm accent beads
Tools:
flat nose, chain nose plyers, flush cutters & ruler

Wednesday workshop open to the public
4/15/2026: Bridget Foster; wire bead bracelet
Kit's will be available for $10 each

Materials 10 10mm beads and 2.75' 18ga round and 3.3' of 20ga round or 1/2 round wire
Tools:flat nose, chain nose plyers, flush cutters & ruler

Machines: Members of our tool committee will be available to help with cutting and cabbing gemstones. As always, we will have the club machines available for metal & gemstone testing, gemstone cutting, and cabbing. There is a $3 tool maintenance fee to use the machines.

Meeting Minutes

GULF COAST GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

February 2026 Minutes (no meeting in March)

Meeting called to order: 1:00 pm by Stephanie Hatcher, President.

Meeting Minutes: Minutes from the January meeting were printed in the newsletter and reviewed. Motion was made by Barbi Beatty and seconded by Vicki Reynolds to accept the minutes as printed in the Snoopy Gems Newsletter. Motion carried.

Treasurer: Barbi Beatty presented the treasurer's report, which included the total for all accounts. Motion to accept made by Belinda Marcum and seconded by Allan Elliott. Motion carried.

Committee Reports

Sunshine: Reba Shotts not present. Stephanie Hatcher stated Reba has been sending out cards.

Membership: All dues should be paid by the end of January to qualify for scholarships. Some members have not paid dues for 2026.

Library Closet Inventory: Items in the closet were discussed

Communication: Please check out your email from the club for information and a link to the website. That is where you will find most of the current information regarding classes and activities for the group.

Newsletter: The newsletter was distributed at the meeting. The website is now up to date. Posting more on Facebook was discussed.

Show: Members discussed wearing matching t-shirts for the show. Barbi stated we still have matching blue work aprons with the club patch on them.

Community Outreach: Our committee members Becky Rutz and Rachel Rocco are out of the country.

Workshops: Today's workshop by Vicki Reynolds; Chainmail beaded Bracelet.

Scholarships: Scholarship drawing will be held at the next meeting.

Field Trips: There were discussions about future field trips for digs.

New Business: The Mary C. had a problem with their calendar. Our club was not on the calendar for our meeting today. Sarah Quarqish, the Mary C Director requested that we provide graphics for our public classes. There was a discussion on purchasing rocks for the gemstone trees for the show. Barbi volunteered to look for some at the SFMS rockhound roundup in Live Oak FL.

Motion to Adjourn: 2:00 PM motion made to adjourn by Barbi Beatty, second by Vicki Reynolds, motion carried.

Door Prizes: Drawings held for door prizes.

Reported by: Barbi Beatty

Happy April Birthday

Alexandra Bosarge, Liz Giamalva, Stacey LePage, Jolene Rosado, Pinky Rodrigue, & Jane Cook

April's birthstone is the beautiful and timeless diamond. Diamonds have been cherished for their beauty and rarity for centuries and are considered the most precious and valuable of all gemstones.

Diamonds are formed deep within the earth's crust under intense pressure and high temperatures. The carbon atoms that make up diamonds are arranged in a crystal structure that gives them their unique hardness and durability. This strength makes them the ideal choice for engagement rings and other jewelry that is meant to be worn every day.

Diamonds come in a variety of colors, including white, yellow, pink, blue, and even black. The color of a diamond is determined by the presence of certain impurities and can greatly affect its value. The most valuable diamonds are colorless and have a high degree of clarity and brilliance.

The carat weight of a diamond is another important factor in determining its value. A carat is a unit of measurement that refers to the weight of a diamond, with one carat equaling 0.2 grams. The larger the diamond, the rarer it is, and the more valuable it becomes.

The tradition of giving a diamond as a gift dates back to ancient times when diamonds were believed to have magical properties that could protect the wearer from harm. Today, diamonds are still seen as a symbol of love and commitment and are often given as engagement rings or anniversary gifts.

If you were born in April, you are lucky enough to have the diamond as your birthstone. Whether you prefer a classic solitaire engagement ring or a modern diamond studded pendant necklace, there is a piece of diamond jewelry that is perfect for every taste and style.

In addition to being beautiful and valuable, diamonds are also believed to have healing properties. They are said to enhance energy and promote spiritual and emotional well-being. Whether you choose to wear diamonds for their beauty, their value, or their healing properties, there is no denying the timeless appeal of this precious gemstone.



Diamonds are one of the most well-known and sought after gemstones in the world. They are renowned for their beauty, durability, and rarity. The diamond is a crystalline form of carbon that is formed deep within the earth's mantle, under conditions of high pressure and temperature. In this article, we will explore the structure and identifying features of the diamond.

Structure:

Diamonds have a unique crystal structure that gives them their unique properties. Each carbon atom in a diamond is bonded to four neighboring carbon atoms in a tetrahedral arrangement. This creates a three-dimensional network of carbon atoms that is extremely strong and rigid. The carbon bonds in diamonds are very strong, which is why diamonds are so hard and durable.

Identifying Features:



There are several features that can be used to identify a diamond. Some of these features include:

Hardness: Diamonds are the hardest natural substance known to man. They score a 10 on the Mohs scale of hardness, which is a scale that measures the relative hardness of minerals. This means that diamonds can scratch any other substance, but they cannot be scratched by anything else.

Luster: Diamonds have a very high refractive index, which means that they reflect light very well. This gives diamonds a unique sparkle and brilliance, which is referred to as their luster.

Color: Diamonds can come in a variety of colors, from colorless to yellow, pink, blue, green, and even black. The most valuable diamonds are colorless, but some colored diamonds are also highly prized.

Clarity: Most diamonds have some internal flaws, called inclusions, and external flaws, called blemishes. The clarity of a diamond is determined by the size, number, and location of these flaws. Diamonds with few or no flaws are more valuable than diamonds with many flaws.

Cut: The way a diamond is cut can greatly affect its value and beauty. A well-cut diamond will have good proportions, symmetry, and polish, which will enhance its luster and brilliance.

In conclusion, diamonds have a unique crystal structure that gives them their exceptional hardness and durability. Their identifying features, including their hardness, luster, color, clarity, and cut, make them one of the most desirable gemstones in the world. When purchasing a diamond, it is important to consider these identifying features to ensure that you are getting a high quality and valuable gemstone.

Curling Stones: Granite, Ice, and Centuries of Precision

Few pieces of sporting equipment are as iconic—or as geologically fascinating—as the curling stone. Polished, heavy, and engineered for remarkable precision, curling stones sit at the center of one of the world's oldest winter sports: Curling. Behind their smooth glide across pebbled ice lies a rich history, rare geology, and meticulous craftsmanship.


A Brief History of Curling

Curling originated in 16th-century Scotland, where players slid stones across frozen lochs and ponds. The earliest written record dates to 1541, and paintings by Flemish artist Pieter Bruegel the Elder depict curling-like games on winter ice scenes from the 1500s. Early stones were simply river rocks or hand-shaped stones gathered locally. They varied dramatically in size, weight, and shape. Some even had iron handles hammered into the top. It wasn't until the 18th and 19th centuries that the sport became standardized, particularly after the formation of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club in 1838. This organization formalized rules and specifications, including weight and dimensions of stones. Scottish immigrants carried the sport to Canada in the 18th and 19th centuries, where it flourished. Today, Canada is one of the dominant nations in international curling competition. Curling became an official Olympic medal sport at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano, Japan, although it had appeared as a demonstration sport several times before.

What Type of Stone Is Used?

Modern curling stones are made from a very specific type of granite. Not just any granite will do.

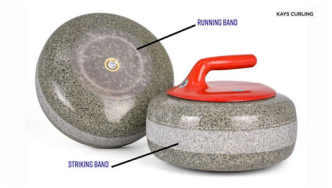
The stone must be: Extremely dense, Very low in water absorption, Highly resistant to chipping and cracking, and Able to withstand repeated freezing and thawing. For these reasons, most of the world's curling stones are made from granite quarried from a small island off the coast of


Why Ailsa Craig?

Ailsa Craig is a volcanic plug rising dramatically from the Firth of Clyde. Its granite has rare physical properties that make it ideal for curling stones. Two specific types of granite are traditionally used:**Blue Hone granite** is extremely dense with low porosity and is highly resistant to water absorption.**Common Green granite** is slightly less dense and often used for the body of the stone.

Blue Hone granite is especially prized for the running band (the narrow ring on the bottom of the stone that contacts the ice). Its low water absorption prevents micro-fractures during freeze–thaw cycles, which would otherwise degrade performance. Today, the primary manufacturer of curling stones is Kays Curling, which has produced Olympic stones for decades and continues to quarry granite from Ailsa Craig under carefully regulated conditions.

Standard Specifications
Modern curling stones are highly regulated. According to international rules:
Weight: Maximum 44 pounds (19.96 kg)
Circumference: Maximum 36 inches
Height: Minimum 4.5 inches



Each stone has a polished granite body with a concave bottom and a narrow circular running band (the only part that contacts the ice). It has a detachable handle usually colored to indicate team. The concave bottom of the stone reduces surface contact, allowing the stone to glide on a thin film of water created by friction.

How Curling Stones Are Made
The process of manufacturing a curling stone is a blend of geology, engineering, and fine craftsmanship.
Quarrying:
Granite blocks are extracted from Ailsa Craig in limited operations. Because the island is also a protected wildlife sanctuary (notably for seabirds), quarrying is tightly controlled and infrequent. Large blocks are cut and transported to the mainland for processing.
Rough Shaping:
The granite block is cut into cylindrical blanks slightly larger than final dimensions. Precision diamond saws are used due to granite's hardness.
Turning and Shaping:
The blank is mounted on a lathe, where it is shaped into its distinctive rounded profile. The concave underside is carefully machined to exact tolerances.
Creating the Running Band
The most critical feature is the narrow running surface on the bottom—typically about 6–7 mm wide. This band must be perfectly level and precisely shaped to ensure predictable curl and glide.
In high-end stones, the running surface may be made from Blue Hone granite, even if the body is Common Green granite. The two pieces are bonded together with advanced adhesives and mechanical joining techniques.

Polishing and Finishing
The stone is progressively polished to a smooth finish. The handle, usually made from durable composite material, is attached using a threaded bolt system so it can be replaced if damaged. Each finished stone is carefully weighed and balanced to meet competitive standards.

The Physics Behind the Curl
Curling stones "curl" due to the interaction between the rotating stone and the textured ice surface. Before play, the ice is "pebbled" with small droplets that freeze into tiny bumps.
As the rotating stone travels over this pebbled surface:
Friction slightly melts the ice under the running band
Asymmetrical friction between the front and back of the rotating stone causes it to curve
Sweeping temporarily reduces friction and delays curl
The precision of the granite's surface and density directly affects how predictably the stone behaves.

A Geological Legacy on Ice
What makes curling stones unique among sports equipment is their geological specificity. Few sports rely so heavily on one small geological source. The granite of Ailsa Craig is over 60 million years old, formed from slowly cooled magma beneath the Earth's surface.
Each stone is not just a tool of competition, but a shaped piece of ancient volcanic history.
From frozen Scottish lochs to Olympic arenas, curling stones represent the marriage of natural stone, craftsmanship, and centuries of sporting tradition. Their smooth glide across ice carries with it a story of geology, innovation, and enduring winter culture.

Workshop/ Classes:

List of upcoming class dates:

Sat-Apr 11thStephanie Hatcher beaded wire wrapped pendant

Wed-Apri 15th- Bridget Foster; wire beadded bracelet

Sat-May 9th- Stephanie Hatcher; Beaded stick earrings

Wed-May 20th- Karen Anderson; Necklace

Sat-June 13th- Bridget Foster; shell prong pendant

Wed-June 17th- Barbi Beatty; Pearls

Sat-Nov 18th- Vicki Reynolds; Spring Christmas Tree

We always welcome new members!

Date_____ Misssissippi Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society

http://www.mgcgms.org **Application for Membership**

Individual: $20.00 Individual +1 relative Same Address: $30.00 Junior Under 18: $6.00

Name: _____ Cell: _____

Name: _____ Cell: _____

Address: _____ Home Phone. _____

City: _____

State: _____ Email 1: _____

Zip: _____ Email 2: _____

Members Birthdays

Adult: _____ Birthday M/D: _____

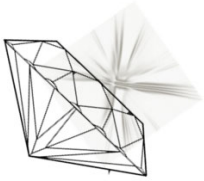
Adult: _____ Birthday M/D: _____

Junior: _____ Birthday M/D/Y: _____

Junior: _____ Birthday M/D/Y: _____

Please Check All Applicable Interests

- ○ Beading
- ○ Chain Mail
- ○ Field Trips
- ○ Fossils
- ○ Others:_____
- ○ Cabbing
- ○ PMC
- ○ Faceting
- ○ Wire Wrapping
- ○ Jewelry Making
- ○ Lapidary
- ○ Minerals
- ○ Silver Smithing



How did you hear of us?_____

Please check the following:

- ○ I understand that my picture or likeness may be used in Society promotions.
- ○ I authorize MGCGMS to include my contact information be included in Society listings for members to contact each other only.

Signature:_____

Signature:_____

Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society Inc.
P.O. Box 857 Ocean Springs MS 39566
mgcgms@bellsouth.net

Snoopy Gems
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The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.
The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc.
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SFMS	John Wright: Past President
SFMS	Barbi Beatty: Treasurer & Past Asst Treasurer & Insurance Liaison
SFMS	Buddy Shotts: Past Long-range Planning, Past President, Past State Director

Annual dues are:
$20 Individual
$30 (2) Members in same house hold
$6 Junior

2026 Workshop 10am/ Meeting 1pm & Dates

January 10 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
February 14 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
March 14 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
April 11 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
May 9 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
June 13 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
July 11 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
August 8 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
September 25 After Vendor Dinner
October 10 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
November 14 Mary C. 9:30-4:00
December 12 Christmas Party Mary C. 11:00am-3:30pm

Dates subject to change.
Be sure to check each month!
The September meeting is the Friday evening of the gem show after the dinner for the dealers at the Ocean Springs Civic Center Building.
December will be our Christmas Party and Installation of Officers

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

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The Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society is a Non-profit Organization Dedicated to Education, Science, and the Lapidary Arts and Crafts

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P.O. Box857
Ocean Springs, MS 39566