



# Snoopy Gems

Volume 41 Number 9 September 2015

Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society Inc.



MGGCMS Established in 1974

Email: [mggcms@bellsouth.net](mailto:mggcms@bellsouth.net)

## *Presidents Message*

It's really been a hot summer, but fall is just around the corner according to the seasonal calendars. Fall temperatures are normally a welcome change and most of us are ready to spend some time outside; maybe even do a little rock hunting. It's also the season where most of the critters that bite or sting and underbrush with briars, thorns, and poison are still around; all of which are found in abundance in our area. It is also the wildlife hunting season and you should be well aware of what is going on in the areas you plan to visit. So-oooo, if you are planning field trips or other outdoor activities in undeveloped woodlands stay alert and be careful, we don't want to lose any of you.

It's also time to start getting ready for our annual show. We have over 20 display cases that are available. We also have a committee working on getting new liners made for the cases. I've seen a lot of the jewelry made by members along with great mineral specimens fossils, and many other really interesting items at our club meetings that would make some really appealing displays, and now is the time to start planning an exhibit. If you need help in developing your idea for an exhibit, let me know. I know it's work, but fun work and you will really enjoy sharing your creations or special interest items with other members and visitors.

The show requires a lot of help from the members of our society.. Let the Show Chairman know if you are available to assist before, during, or after the show. I know a lot of you think it's a long time before the show, but knowing who will be available in advance would really be a big help to the Show Chairman and the other Show Committees who are starting to develop their final plans for the show.

Looking forward to seeing all of you at the meeting.

John M. Wright

## **Workshop**

### **Project for September**

MGGCMS workshops for September and October will focus on making Christmas ornaments which will be displayed at our Gem and Mineral Show and will be given as door prizes at our Christmas party. These ornaments may be either beaded balls like were done last year, wire ornaments, or pendants in the Christmas theme. It will be your own responsibility to find a pattern (many available on internet) and to purchase your own supplies. I am sure you will want to use good quality materials so you can make a good impression with your skills.

If you are unable to come up with something e-mail Vicki Reynolds ([Artistview@bellsouth.net](mailto:Artistview@bellsouth.net)) or Dave Cook ([dwcook@cableone.net](mailto:dwcook@cableone.net)) and they will try to help.



## August Meeting Minutes 2015

Meeting called to order by John Wright President

Welcome and sick report found both Lois and Jerry Meador were still ill. We hope they will soon return.

Secretary report was noted as published in Snoopy Gems. The report was accepted as printed.

Treasurer's report was read by Treasurer Barbi Beatty. The report was accepted as read.

Our annual club picnic was held at the Seashore Methodist Church Pavilion on 7/25/15. The extra food was served at the meeting today.

This year's scholarship winners, Dave and Jane Cook, were reimbursed for their class fees.

Show Report was given by our Show Chairman Bill LaRue. He stated 14 dealers contracts were submitted so far.

One of our dealers is selling tools this year. He would like a list of tools club members would like to purchase so he could bring what's needed.

Unfinished business was reported by Buddy Shotts. The faceting machine approved at the last meeting was purchased for the club. He stated in addition to the faceting machine there were also laps, unfinished stones, and other equipment included in our purchase.

Thanks to Buddy and Reba for going out there and getting the equipment for the club.

The machine was put to use by the Faceting group which meets on Wednesday nights at the Gautier Sports Complex. The complex is owned by club members Angie and Brad Troutman.

We thank them for allowing us to use this space for faceting.

Any member interested in faceting is invited to come see what their doing 6-10P.M. Wednesdays. Call before coming for directions and instructions for Buddy and Reba.

It was announced that members need to start signing up to work at our gem show in November. Raffle items made by members should be given to Barbi Beatty for photographing and posting in the Snoopy. Lisa Fitch suggested the items should have a retail value of at least \$50. Barbi Beatty stated that we didn't have set an exact value on the raffle items, but if someone wanted to make a motion they could. No motion was made. It was stated the items should be art based or items pertaining to the club such as jewelry, gemstones, or mineral specimens.

The Display Case the club has at the Mississippi Welcome Center on I10 needs to be cleaned. Linda at the center has a key. Cool LED lighting should be installed. Jim Kirschner said he could do it. Money for this project is within budget.

John and Liz went to the center and took pictures; also they received some donated specimens.



Our wooden display cases for the Show need recovering. Vickie Reynolds volunteered to make those repairs.

Show and Tell featured peridot. Jane Cook, Barbi Beatty and Bill LaRue displayed their specimens. Bob & Cathy Marousky attended William Holland and brought back the items they made in class to share with the club.

A 50-50 was held and Vickie won. Door prizes were awarded. A Silent Auction was held by Liz Platt and the money was donated to the club.

Workshops were conducted all day. 4 faceting machines were running along with 2 cabbing machines. The wire wrap, bracelet and pendant group were working hard. Any new ideas for workshops should be given to Dave Cook.

Members interested in attending a Wire wrap class by Pat Brown in November should let Barbi know. The class fee is \$25. The fee needs to be pre paid. You can bring your checks or cash to the September or October meeting. Mrs. Brown will have project kits available to purchase the day of the class. There will be a supply list available for members who want to purchase their own materials.

A motion to end the meeting was carried. Meeting ended at 2PM.

Minutes presented by John Guglik Secretary

## September 2015 Birthdays

Liz Platt

Elmyra LaRue

Cathy Marousky

Jerry Meador



September



### History of Sapphire

Sapphires were believed to have special protective powers, such as preventing envy and protecting the wearer from poisoning. Some ancient cultures even thought that if a sapphire container held a venomous snake, it would die. In addition, people believed that sapphire had medical healing properties, such as the ability to cure colic, rheumatism, blindness, and mental illnesses.

### Science of Sapphire

Sapphire is a form of the mineral corundum, and it exists in a range of colors from light to dark blue. Corundum is the second-hardest mineral after diamond and occurs in a wide variety of colors. Sapphire is any form of corundum that is not red, as red varieties are called rubies. Sapphires can be formed in crystalline limestone, gneiss, schist, and other crystalline rocks. Gem varieties occur chiefly in placer (river gravel) deposits.

### SAPPHIRES

September's Birthstone

By John M. Wright, RPG



4-ct. plus Kashmir sapphire (Photo: John McLean; Gem: Pala International)

### Physical Properties

Family: Corundum

Chemical Comp. : Aluminum Oxide  $Al_2O_3$

Crystal System: Trigonal (bar  $3 \ 2/m$ )

Crystal Habit: Typically a six-sided

elongated tapered crystal with close transverse striations that resemble a bipyramid (barrel

shape that's been stretched a little); sometimes hexagonal prisms; can also be tabular.

Birefringence: (0.4)

Reflective Indices:  $n_e$  1.760,  $n_w$  1.769

(+0.009, -0.005)

Density: 4.00 (+/- 0.05) g/cm<sup>3</sup>

Hardness: 9

Cleavage: Absent, sometimes there is parting which occurs in three directions.

Fracture: Conchoidal

Continued on page 4;

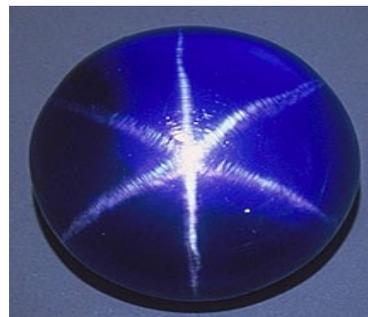
**Pleochroic:** Variable from different viewing directions and color intensifies in strong artificial light, ultraviolet light or direct sunlight. Sapphires are a variety of the mineral corundum which is a nine on the MOH's scale (MOH is Mineral Order of Hardness) and as such are extremely hard and durable (exceeded only by diamond). Because of their hardness, sapphires take a really fine surface polish which gives them a very high luster making them well suited for jewelry and many other applications that benefit or enhance our lives. The name comes from the Persian word "safir" for "Beloved of Saturn" then translated into Greek as "Sapherois" and Latin as "Sappirus" meaning "blue stone". Based on historical records it is believed that originally sapphire referred to what we now know as Lapis Lazuli.

Sapphires are known as the stone of serenity and they have traditionally been associated with the sacred and divine. Royalty often favored them for crown jewels as a symbol of divine favor and the mark of a prudent and wise ruler. It was one of the 12 jewels in Aaron's Breast Plate. Some ancient societies believe that sapphires were a powerful talisman that gave the particular wearer protection against diseases and could bring peace, happiness, and increase intelligence. They were also used to test a female's loyalty and supposedly the stone would change its color if the wearer was unfaithful. Men wore them to prevent terror and poverty.

The colors of sapphires can range over a wide spectrum but the most popular in the crystalline form is blue. Red ones are in a category all their own and are known as rubies (for more on rubies see the July edition of Snoopy Gems). They often have other colors that are subservient which can add or subtract from an overall tonal quality and consequently may enhance or detract from the stone's appeal. Sapphires are pleochroic (display more than one color due to the different absorption of light in different directions), so as you view the stone the color tone that you see should change if you turn the stone or change the direction of the light source. In a faceted sapphire, these colors can often be seen as "flashes" when the stone is rotated or moved around in the light source. Sapphires are also fluorescent and the color should be more intense under strong light particularly when exposed to the ultraviolet rays of direct sunlight

Tonal color may also be influenced by inclusions of tiny rutile needles which are similar to fiber optics. In small quantities these inclusions often enhance sapphires and gemologists referred to this occurrence as "silk" as they cause these stone to have a silky sheen. In sufficient quantity these inclusions result in zoning along crystal growth lines which traps or interferes with light rays passing through the stone and produces a very distinctive pattern of white light lines resembling a star with six legs or rays. The stars show up best in opaque stone that have been cut and polished as cabochons and are known as star sapphires.

The better star sapphires are influenced by two very basic traits. First: uniformity, intensity, and attractiveness of the stone's translucent or transparent body color. Second: is the strength and sharpness of the star. All six legs should be straight and equally prominent and show a bright six-legged star in the dome of the cabochon.



Star Light – Star Bright

International Colored Gemstone Asso.

Photo by: ICA Gem Bureau, Idar-Oberstein,  
Germany

Translucent or opaque star sapphires are much more common than the transparent or crystalline ones. Crystalline stones with a star are rare and quite expensive and better quality ones are extremely expensive. They are becoming even more rare as most rough today is cut into faceted stones after heating instead of being cut into cabochons to display the star. (I should mention here that while heat treating usually detracts from the value of most gemstones, it seems to be acceptable with sapphires and does not reduce their value for some reason). Both crystalline and opaque star sapphires rarely have the combination of intense color and a sharp prominent star with equal rays. Here again the better ones are very rare and consequently quite expensive.

**Continued on page 5**

To further enhance star sapphires the bottoms are usually left unpolished so that the light is trapped and cannot pass through. Some stones with lesser quality have a false bottom attached. Usually these stones are lighter in color and attaching a darker bottom will give the illusion of a richer color and increase the prominence of the stone's rays. Just recently diffusion star sapphires have appeared in the market. These are man made from the same materials as natural sapphires, but do not have good color or a star. By the addition of chemicals and heat treating the color is enhanced and a star is artificially added to the surface of the stone.

Sapphires have been commercially mined at several locations in the USA. and were found as early as 1865 in the gravels of the Missouri river in Montana. Most commercial mines are still located along the Missouri river. Sapphires have also been commercially mined in the Cowee valley of North Carolina, but today the operations are mostly fee mines operated for rock-hounds and tourists. They have been found in many other locations, but not in sufficient quantity, quality, or size to warrant commercial mining. The nearest place to us for hunting sapphires or corundum is in Clay and Randolph counties of Alabama. I found a number of red opaque corundum specimens (similar to the ones found in North Carolina) near Alexander City in Alabama and some very small pink crystalline sapphire crystals about thirty miles southwest of Alexander City.

Corundum crystals in most cases are normally pretty easy to spot because of their unique shape (lengthwise it looks like a barrel that has been stretched a little bit and in a cross-section it has six distinct sides). So their shape would be the "key factor" that I would use in the field for initial identification.

Horizontal view showing barrel shape



Cross-section view showing the six sides



Corundum is second only to diamond in hardness, so a scratch test would be a good field check. You can also do a streak test and it should be "white" for corundum. Specific gravity is another test that can be used, but would be difficult in the field.

Star sapphires seem to have a special appeal to men and is frequently the stone of choice for their jewelry. I can well remember making trips to Bangkok, Thailand in the late fifties and always having a list of names, usually men, that wanted me to purchase star sapphires for them. I never minded shopping for the sapphires as it was very interesting. The merchant that I bought from had the finished stones sorted by color and size which he kept in ordinary water buckets. He would pour the different ones out in piles on a table and I would choose the ones that I wanted. The going price for a beautiful blue star sapphire (about 3/8 of an inch in diameter) was \$2.00 and that was the whole stone not the price per carat. Ones about the size of half a marble were \$2.50. Black star sapphires were the most expensive (25 cents more than blue) and red ones were the cheapest. I got a free stone for every five stones I bought and one or two more depending on the total I spent. Sort of makes you want to cry doesn't it. I also got to watch them cab and facet stones, but as fascinating as it was, it's another story that I hope to include in a later bulletin.

(Sources for information contained in this article are: The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Rocks and Minerals by Charles W. Chesterman, a Borzoi Book, Published by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1978 and Simon & Schuster's Guide to Gems and Precious Stones, by Curzio Cipriani and Alessandro Borelli; Kennie Lyman, U.S. Editor, 1986. Also, Simon and Schuster's Guide to Rocks and Minerals, 1977, 1978.)

## Snoopy Gems

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S.C.R.I.B.E. (Special Congress Representing Involved Bulletin Editors)

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<b>Member at Large (2 year)</b>	Bill White (228) 875-8716

### COMMITTEES

<b>Membership</b>	Barbi Beatty (228)238-9900
<b>Show Chairman</b>	Bill LaRue (228) 229-8781
<b>Silent Auction</b>	Open
<b>Historien</b>	Lettie White (228) 875-8716
<b>Librarian</b>	Barbi Beatty (228) 238-9900
<b>Sunshine</b>	Open

<b>ALAA</b>	John Wright	Director (228) 875-9192
<b>SFMS</b>	John Wright	Past President (228) 875-9192
<b>SFMS</b>	Buddy Shotts	Boundries (601) 947-7245

**Annual dues are:**

**\$16 Individual**

**\$20 (2) Members in same house hold**

**\$6 Junior**

## 2015 Workshop/Meeting Dates

February 14, 2015 St Paul's Church 9:00-4:00

\*March 14, 2015 OS Library 1:30-4:30 (1/2 Day)\*

April 11, 2015 OS Library 9:30-4:30

May 9, 2015 OS Library 9:30-4:30

June 6, 2015 OS Library 9:30-4:30

July 18, 2015 OS Library 9:30-4:30

August 8, 2015 OS Library 9:30-4:30

**September 12, 2015 OS Library 9:30-4:30**

October 10, 2015 OS Library 9:30-4:30

November At Show

December TBA

\*Be sure to check Dates each month! \*

\*\*The November meeting is the Thursday evening of the gem show after the dinner for the dealers at the Jackson County Fairgrounds Civic Center Building. December will be our Christmas Party and Installation of Officers \*\*

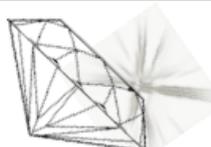
## September 2015

Su M Tu W Th Fri Sa

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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	31		

# We always welcome new members! Tell a friend!

Date: **Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem and Mineral Society**

<a href="http://www.mgcgms.org">http://www.mgcgms.org</a>		Application for Membership	
Individual: \$16.00		Individual +1 relative Same Address: \$20.00	
		Junior Under 18: \$6.00	
Name: _____		Home Phone: _____	
Address: _____		Cell 1. _____	
City: _____		Cell 2. _____	
State: _____		Email 1: _____	
Zip: _____		Email 2: _____	
<b>Members in the Same Household</b>			
Adult: _____		Birthday M/D: _____	
Adult: _____		Birthday M/D: _____	
Junior: _____		Birthday M/D/Y: _____	
Junior: _____		Birthday M/D/Y: _____	
Junior: _____		Birthday M/D/Y: _____	
<b>Please Check All Applicable Interests</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Beading	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cabbing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chain Mail	<input type="checkbox"/>	PMC
<input type="checkbox"/>	Field Trips	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faceting
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fossils	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wire Wrapping
<input type="checkbox"/>	Others: _____		<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/> Jewelry Making
			<input type="checkbox"/> Lapidary
			<input type="checkbox"/> Minerals
			<input type="checkbox"/> Silver Smithing
<b>How did you hear of us?</b> _____			
<b>Please check the following:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that my picture or likeness may be used in Society promotions.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	I authorize MGCGMS to include my contact information be included in Society listings for members to contact each other only.		
Signature: _____			
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# Snoopy Gems

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<http://www.mgCGMS.org>



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