

# GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB

MARCH 2011

## *the Prez sez ...*

I would like to tell you about a very important “member” of our club. This member has been present at every meeting for the past 25 to 30 years, occupying a prominent position at the front of the audience and acting as a treasure trove of rock, gem and mineral information that is readily available for all members. I am referring to the CG&MC library – that funky looking hinged box with shelves crammed with books, notebooks, newsletters, videos, etc..

The library was built by a couple of members, probably back in the 80s, and has been in constant use ever since. For those of you who haven't had the opportunity to make use of it, let me tell you about the wonders that it contains.

There are reference books on a variety of subjects from rocks to gems to minerals and jewelry making. For the newer member there's “Practical Gem Knowledge for the Amateur” while the more advanced individual may prefer “Gems and Precious Stones of North America”. For the person interested in exploring North Carolina geology there's “Carolina Rocks” or “Mineral Collecting Sites in North Carolina” or how about “Fossil Collecting in North Carolina”. If you're ready to move on to more unusual and distinctive cabbings materials there's nothing better than “Agates and Jaspers” by our own webmaster – Ron Gibbs. For the more adventuresome, there's “Death of a Goldmine”.

If you're trying to decide on a new hobby there's “The Complete Metalsmith”, “You can Master Jewelry Design and Creation”, “The Best Little Beading Book” and “Faceting for Amateurs” (watch out Jimmy Strickland). There are 5 notebooks filled with incredible instructions and diagrams for wire wrapping with designs from some of the top teachers in the field.

From the documentary perspective you can borrow CDs and VHS

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#### *A review of the contents reveals the following categories of information:*

- ✓ Reference books on rocks, minerals, precious metals, gemstones and semi-precious gemstones
- ✓ Adventure stories related to mining and geological exploration
- ✓ Maps and locations for rock and mineral collectors
- ✓ “How To” books on lapidary and jewelry making methods and techniques
- ✓ Copies of old CG&MC newsletters dating back into the 90s
- ✓ Catalogs
- ✓ Videos



# 2011 CGMC Officers & Board

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### **Christmas Party Chair**

Pat Walker

WEB Site  
[www.charlottegem.com](http://www.charlottegem.com)

tapes on “Dinosaurs”, “Gemstones of America”, The Smithsonian Ultimate Rock Show” and “Noah’s Ark”. There is even a slide presentation with script on “Micro-mounts”.

Pat Walker, our ever-vigilant secretary is in charge of the library and any questions about it should be addressed to her. Borrowing a book is quite simple – the inside back cover of each publication has an envelope attached with a 3x5 card in it. Just take whichever book you want to borrow to Pat during the meeting and she will put your name and date taken on the card,

which then goes into a file box. Take it for as long as you need to and notify Pat when you have returned it.

The library is an outstanding example of one of the many benefits of being a member of the Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club. It stands ready at every meeting to serve your informational leads. Let’s all make an effort to put this important resource to greater use..

Murray Simon  
Head Honcho Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club.

## *Please Do Your Dues, Before the Spring Dew Does!*

We are headed into the third month of the year with spring around the corner, and dues have been due since January. After this month the Club roster will be updated with current paid members, and the newsletter will be sent to only those who are paid up for 2011 beginning in April.

Please see Donna Forstner (our treasurer. You can pay before the monthly meeting as there is usually a table near the door where we pass out name badges, and collect dues or take money for the club raffle.

Individual dues are \$20 a year and family membership is only \$25 dollars a year. All of the officers in the club donate their time and energy. There are regular costs associated with our meeting room (rent \$500-\$600 / yr), snack costs

at the meeting, our club WEB site (~\$100/yr), and the newsletter. Plus we have insurance fees from our parent organizations AFS and SFMS that provide us field trip opportunities throughout the year.

The money also helps support the Jr. Rockhound group which is thriving due mainly to Mary Fisher and her fine work, a club picnic, and a holiday party at the end of the year.



*Sterling Silver and  
Black Jade bracelet  
1st prize in the raffle*

## ***Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club Monthly Meeting***

***- March 17, 2011 Thursday -- 7:00 pm --***

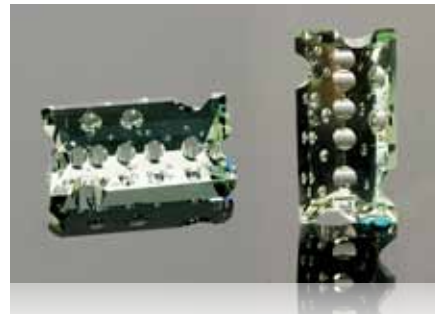
**Location: Charlotte Nature Museum 1658 Sterling Road  
Charlotte, NC 28209 (704) 372 - 61261**

Find out why your “BLING BLINGS” shine and sparkle.

***“Physical and Optical Properties of Minerals and Gems”***

***by John Rasmussen***

John Rasmussen, an accredited Jewelry Professional from Gemological Institute of America with a BS and MS in Geology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Gemology education from International Gem Society.



Color, Index of Refraction, Optical Character, Specific Gravity, etc. etc.

## ***Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club Junior Rockhounds Meeting***

March, 2011

***Home Rock Collections and Identification***

Morning meeting in Concord Afternoon meeting in Matthews

Contact Mary Fisher for further information [mefisher@att.net](mailto:mefisher@att.net)

# Using a Digital Camera to Photograph slabs, cabs, gemstones, minerals and jewelry - Part XVIII *by ron gibbs*

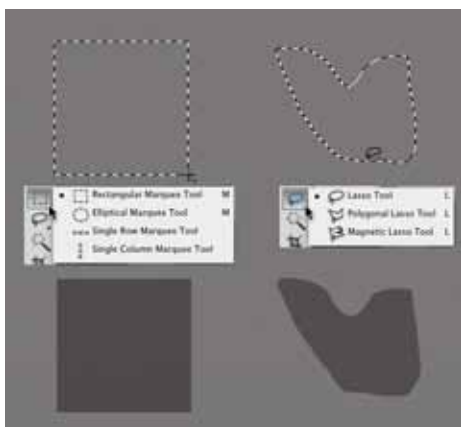


When applying a correction to an image it is not always necessary to apply the same correction to the entire image. So how do you select just a portion of an image to work on? This article will show how to use the SELECTION TOOL(s) to mark a partial area for the desired correction.

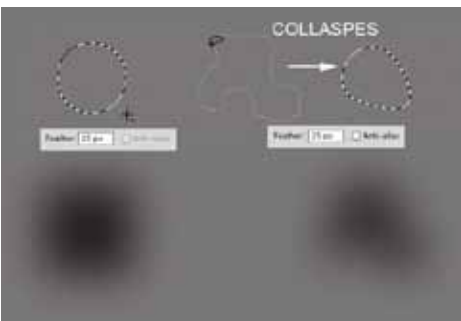
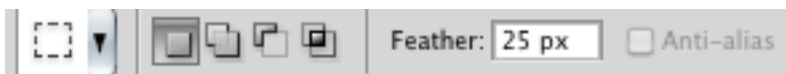
Let's examine the white calcite in the first image. It has a strong reddish reflection on it coming from the right side. If you were to correct the image using the EYE-DROPPER tool illustrated in the previous article, then the resultant image would be turned largely a cyan color. (See second image) The area sampled by the eye-dropper would be color corrected back to white, but the remainder of the mineral also receives the same change and converts the remainder of the image to the cyan color.

To fix this kind of problem we need to employ a selection tool, that will limit the area of the change. Although easy to do, it requires a small trick to be completely convincing. Selection tools in both Photoshop and Photoshop Elements tend to have precise outlines, and will produce an easy to identify border if the desired modification is even moderately large.

In the third image I have used selection tools to select a square area of the gray rectangle using the RECTANGULAR SELECTION TOOL and an odd-shaped area of the rectangle using the LASSO TOOL. I then made an adjustment to the LEVELS command and made that area of the rectangle substantially darker. Just below the small menu items you can see the result of the change. You tell exactly where the change has been made as it produces a strong outline defining it. This type of shape demarcation is often easy to spot even in a photograph.



To fix the problem and help hide any editing done by you, it is useful to make a change to one of the SELECTION TOOL parameters. When any of the selection tools are chosen, they may be adjusted with the FEATHER tool to make the edges every soft and gradual. The feather sets a boundary around the selection and makes a gradation in transition between the selected area and the surrounding area.

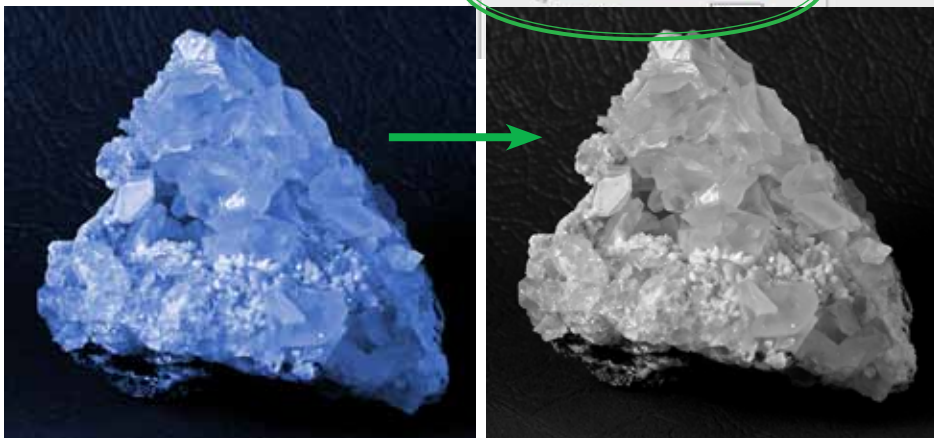
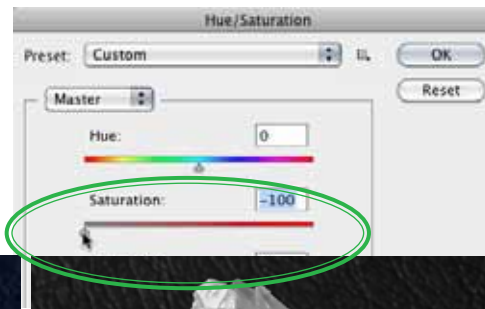


See the bottom image to better understand the type of selection that the FEATHER TOOL provides. The upper row shows a feather value set to 25 pixels. The original rectangle or lasso selection look normal until the mouse button is released, and it then appears to draw-in to a rounded shape. The bottom images show the same selection after the levels command was used to darken the selected area. The effect is complete near

the center and slowly fades away toward the edge of the selection. This makes a soft edge around the periphery and hides the border which is diagnostic of the change. In the right top image the feather was set to 25 and the lasso was used to select the right side of the crystal. It was then color corrected using the eye-dropper in the levels command.

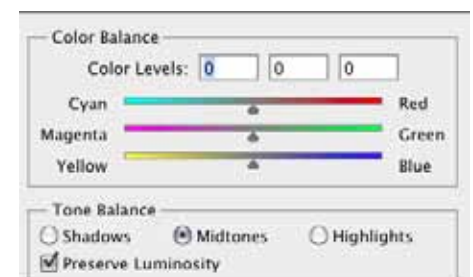
Notice that the selection area is shifted back to white after the correction and there is no tale-tale line around the selection showing the boundaries of the change. The amount of the FEATHER is set based on the total resolution of the image. This original image was about 800 pixels across and I set the feather to 25 pixels. As a rough rule of thumb about 25 pixels of feather for every 1000 of resolution is a reasonable starting point. The final results will dictate the proper feather selection.

A few more tricks for fixing a color cast is special situations. First if the mineral is white, black or gray you can simply use the SATURATION tool in the soft-



ware and dial the saturation back to zero. In this case it removes the entire color cast as a hue with zero saturation is neutral. This technique can also be used with a selection area to set one crystal in a mixed mineral back to a neutral value. (Look for the SATURATION TOOL in both Photoshop and Photoshop Elements - it's likely in other photo editing software too.

Another tools useful for selective color changing or general color correction is the COLOR BALANCE tool, it is set up to help guide you in the proper selection of color. Each pair of associated primary and secondary colors are placed at opposite ends of a slider. To remove one color, simply move the slider for that pair in the opposite direction. Thus to remove RED move the slider toward CYAN. This tool is most useful for correcting selection areas and can be fine tuned using the SHADOWS, MID-TONES, and HIGHLIGHT buttons in the lower dialog. This tool takes practice and is not automatic.



*Color Balance Tool*

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## *Memories of the Ray Mine & Mineral Collecting*

This month's newsletter contains information forwarded to me from Ken Anderson about some government regulation changes and mine shaft closing at the famous Ray mine near Burnsville, NC.

First of all, let me tell you a bit about the geology of that region where an abundance of feldspar and mica lies. This area is part of an approximately 10 mile x 25 mile rock formation called a batholith which spreads thru Avery, Yancey and Mitchell counties.

I have read that it took a hundred million years for this formation to cool. I have also read that very early native Americans mined this area for mica TWO THOUSAND years ago. The mica was used for grave coverings and for wampum.

In the 1700's it is recorded that the Cherokee Indians mined the feldspar and carried it on ox driven sleds to a coastal port where it was put on ships bound for England where the material was ground and used to make fine ceramic wares. When the electric motor was invented by Edison, mica was used as an insulator.

Most of our club members are too young to remember this but the old wood burning stoves which was the source of heat for most homes, had "window" where you could look in and see the flames. These windows were mica.

Early vacuum tube radios and later

televisions all used mica in the glass tubes. Mica has been used in the space industry as an insulator. We had an older rock hound adult friend who was one of the founding members of the Greensboro Gem and Mineral club who would supplement his middle class income by picking up mica scraps at the mine and carefully trimming it then he would package it and sell it to the government.

Now, I will tell you a bit of my personal history with the Ray mine. In the mid 1950's my dad would take me and another rockhound friend to the Spruce Pine area where we would comb the open mine spoils for rock and mineral treasures.

My dad would take us one weekend and as soon as we could go again, my friend's dad would be the designated driver. As soon as I got my driver's license it was off to the hills anytime that I had saved up enough money for gas, and we would camp in a state campground.

What could be better than rock hunting all day and roasting hot dogs by the fire with a rushing mountain stream nearby.? One of our favorite locations was the Ray mine which was a working feldspar and mica mine at the time. At that time much of the mining was done by mountain men as tough as nails.

Holes for dynamite were done with one man holding a star drill which is a steel rod that the holder would rotate after another guy hit

it with a sledge hammer. Many of these miners had worked the mines since they were children and all of their hands were gnarly because of having them broken so many times. When the holes were made into the rock, the dynamite was packed in and the fuse lit.

Many times my friend and I were there in the mine when the big blast happened. The miners would gather us up and we would squat behind a truck and the side of the mountain would be blown off. Now, here is the exciting part for us eager young rock hounds! As soon as the dust began to settle, the miners would let us scurry out on to the tailings.

There we would pick up aquamarine crystals both specimen grade and an occasional gem grade crystal lying on the white powder and rocks. This was Easter egg hunting heaven for a couple of excited rockhounds. We got to know all of the miners and one day they told us that when we came back to look on a stump in the nearby woods. (we were very familiar with the woods as porta potties didn't exist at that time.)

About a month later when we returned, we found a pile of beryl and aquamarine crystals waiting for us. This mine was huge with feldspar dumps the size of several foot ball fields.

Can you imagine any mine owner letting a couple of teenagers be there when blasting was going on with today's legal climate? It is getting harder and harder just to get past the chain length gates at most all mines. We would fill up

our boy scout canteen, ( no one had ever heard of bottled water), pack a lunch of home made peanut butter crackers and a can of vienna sausages and we were happy as we could be to spend from early in the morning until dark doing what we liked best.

My friend saved up and mail ordered a battery powered black light and at night we would look for the fluorescent opal. It was the most exciting thing to walk into an open pit mine and cut that light on and see the entire wall glow bright green.

We had other mine favorites in the area where garnets and other minerals could be found but the Ray mine holds the most wonderful rockhound memories. I visited the Ray mine about ten years ago and was surprised to see how over-

grown it was with vegetation. I was especially sad to see the amount of trash left behind by rockhounds who just did not care about such an historical site.

I am surprised that the government has not tightened the restrictions before now. If you go to Spruce Pine, you will see the huge white holes on the sides of the mountains as the mining still continues. The pure white quartz from the mine when separated, fills the sand traps at the finest golf courses all over the world.

The local rock club in Spruce Pine hosts trips into the mine areas during the gem and mineral show times. If you go to the area, just find a road that leads up to any of the mines. Even though you will find "KEEP OUT ! " signs at the gates, if you walk the road on both

sides, you will find rocks that have bounced off the trucks.

There you can collect garnets, pink and white feldspar, mica and other minerals if you look closely. And the mining companies do not mind you collecting on these roads according to what one mine foreman told me.

If you took a black light at night, I would imagine that you would be rewarded with some new glow in the dark specimens for your collection. I think that it's most important to remind all rockhounds to be respectful of the few remaining sites that we can still get into. If you can carry in a full can of soda, you can sure carry out an empty can.

Jack King,  
Field Trip Chairman

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### *Jewelry Class before General Meetings*

Before the regular monthly meeting of the Gem and Mineral club, Linda Simon has an open workshop and teaching session for the creation of wire-wrap and simple jewelry.

The class utilizes, beads, bangles, copper, silver or gold filled wire to create jewelry pieces.

Linda Simon has the needed tools and can sell you the small amounts of wire necessary to complete any project. Ear-rings, bracelets, pins, and necklaces (pendants) are all open game for creation.

The classes begin about 5:00 pm before the 7:00 pm start of the evening meeting.

Further info email:

lsimon1@carolina.rr.com

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### *Potential Shows of Interest in March ... not all club affiliated*

**18-20—HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA:** 41st show, "Unifour Gem, Mineral, Bead, Fossil and Jewelry Show"; Catawba Valley Gem & Mineral Club; Hickory Metro Convention Center, I-40 Exit 125; Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$4, children and school groups free; contact Baxter Leonard, 2510 Rolling Ridge Dr., Hickory, NC 28602, (828) 320-4028; e-mail: gailandbaxter@aol.com

**25-27—MORGANTON, NORTH CAROLINA:** Wholesale and retail show; Morganton Parks & Recreation Dept.; Collett Street Recreation Center, 300 Collett St.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 12-5; adults \$3, students \$2;

exhibitors, minerals, gems, jewelry, dealers, specimens, lapidary supplies, interactive gem mining booth; contact Gary Leonhardt, 304 College St., Morganton, NC 28655, (828) 439-1866; e-mail: recreation@ci.morganton.nc.us; Web site: www.ci.morganton.nc.us

**25-27—SAVANNAH, GEORGIA:** Wholesale and retail show; AKS Gem Shows; Alee Temple, 100 Eisenberg Dr.; Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; weekend admission \$5; beading classes and demonstrations; contact Kay Schabilion, 5000 W Esplanade Ave., Metairie, LA 70006; e-mail: info@aksshow.com; Web site: www.aksshow.com

***An Official Field Trip of The Cotton Indian Gem & Mineral Society, Stockbridge, GA***

***An Official Field Trip of the Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club***

Saturday April 30, 2011

Girard, Burke County, GA

Meet at 10:00 AM

Leave from Girard Post Office at 10:30 AM

“Savannah River Agate”

**WHERE:** The River road outside of Girard, GA.

**WHEN:** Saturday April 30, 2011

**TIME:** Meet at 10:00 AM and leave the Girard city Post Office on Hwy. 23 at 10:30 AM

*Children and Pets:* Children and pets are welcome but need to be supervised as we will be hunting on a dirt road.

*Trip:* Beautiful Savannah River Agate has been collected at this location for years. I have been told that there is as much material here today as there ever was.

*Collecting:* We will be collecting Savannah River Agate, fossils and micro minerals. This material is actually a conglomeration of agate, jasper, chert, and opalite all mixed together to form a layered specimen that will tumble or cab into beautiful display pieces. This rock occurs as black and brown mottled agate and in a large range of pastel colors from greens to yellows to violets. The fossils you may find are from 30-35 million years old Oligocene age deposits. The micro minerals are located in vugs of the agate/chert rock.

*Special Conditions:* We will be hunting in the roadway and road cuts only. Do NOT leave the road cuts. Please stay off of private property. Please do not go to the collecting site ahead of the group.

*Bring:* You will need to bring a rock hammer and scratching tool to collect the agate. You can dig if you want but make sure you fill in your holes after you're finished. If you plan to look for micro-minerals by busting the larger agate/chert specimens, you will also need some chisels and a sledge. More importantly you NEED eye protection (face shield would be best) and long heavy pants as this agate can act like shrapnel when cracked with a rock hammer or sledge! As always, bring your lunch, plenty of fluids, some bug spray, sun screen, a hat, gloves, sturdy shoes and lots of 5 gal. Buckets (Trust me - you will need them!).

*Where to meet:* We will meet at the Girard city Post Office on Hwy. 23.

*Directions:* From I-20 take Hwy. 520 (west of Augusta) south to Hwy. 56 and travel south. Go through McBean (do not take Hwy. 56 Spur). Turn left on Hwy. 23 to Girard and meet at the Post Office at 10:30 AM.

*Drive time:* From Atlanta 3 to 3 1/2 hours.

Contact:

Harry Hyaduck 678-464-4462

Email [hyaduckh@yahoo.com](mailto:hyaduckh@yahoo.com) or

Kim Cochran 770-979-8331

## ***Cabbing Classes & Fees***



*Morgan Hill Poppy Jasper*

After a review of the comments on cabbing class charges at last month's general meeting, the CG&MC board unanimously approved the following class fees -

One month remains before Sarah leaves to teach at William Holland; to make an appointment to take advantage of her wonderful teaching skills call her at (704) 827-1431.

Full day class with Sarah Lee Boyce	\$20
1/2 day class with Jack King or Murray Simon	\$15
Pre-qualified users can rent time on a machine if it is not used for a class	\$5 / hr