

# GOLDRUSH LEDGER



CHARLOTTE GEM & MINERAL CLUB  
OCTOBER 2011

## Prez Sez ...

The parties are over. The sluice and saws are fast asleep in the trailer, the shoes, socks and pants have dried out from the torrential rains and the aches and pains are starting to ease up. It has been suggested that Mint Hill needs to change the name of their event to Mint Hill Mudness.

There are some indelible memories from both Mathews and Mint Hill that I would like to share with you. At both events the volunteer turnout was quite impressive (Thank you Leslie and Vivian!); it was not uncommon to see eight or ten green shirts selling, interacting with the public, cutting geodes and/or showing kids how to use the sluice.

There were lots of members present during setup and tear-down at both venues, which has not been the case in the past. All in all there was a sense of fellowship among the volunteers who shared in both the positive and negative (mostly wet) aspects of the two weekends.

Older members were introducing themselves to newer members and at least 5 or 6 times I was

asked, "Who's that guy/gal in the green shirt standing next to so and so?" Our green shirts and large green canopy (and green grass) at Mathews marked us as the sharpest exhibitor there. Our green shirts, huge canopy (Thank you Jimmy!) and sexy sluice at Mint Hill marked us as a must-see destination for families with kids (we also had a good number of teens and adults sluicing as well).

There are underlying elements in many of these events that are important to note. Elements that go beyond how much money did we make and how many scholarships will we award. Jimmy and I had just finished setting up on a sunny Sunday morning in Mathews when two well-dressed older gentlemen approached the booth and spent a good bit of time examining the larger geodes with puzzled expressions on their faces. Jimmy was in the process of cutting a large geode I had just bought so I asked if they had any questions.

Basically they were curious as to what those spherical objects were and what we do with them. I started to launch into my "I'm not a geolo-

gist" explanation of how geodes form when Jimmy came over to show me the beautiful agate and crystal halves of my geode. Our guests were quite excited with what they saw, particularly when they learned it had formed internally in layers over a very long period of time.

Turns out they were both ministers who focus their sermons and preaching on building the soul from within, one layer at a time.

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WEB Site

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

That Charlotte Gem & Mineral club geode held a very special meaning for them and I have no doubt it will appear as a strong analogy in future sermons.

On the second day in Mint Hill we were trying to stay dry during the frequent downpours when, at about 5PM, it suddenly stopped raining. I thought this would be a good opportunity to start an early tear-down and departure, but I was out-voted by the sluice team stalwarts who wanted to "try it for another few hours".

With the ground quite soggy and the sky very grey a gentleman approached the booth with his pretty daughter (about 8-9 years old). He almost pleaded with us to let his daughter sluice as that was all she was talking about during the rain. They had found some shelter nearby and as soon as it stopped raining she insisted they go to our booth. He bought one of our \$20 bags and she proceeded to get even more wet with her enthusiastic sluicing. They spent a good deal of time at the "Assay Table" learning about the stones they had found and both seemed delighted with their "treasures". He thanked us several times and they left.

About 30 minutes later they returned and he explained she was hoping to have one of her special stones finished and set so she could wear it. One of our members mentioned Lapidary Arts on Independence Blvd and he took the information down and assured us he would go there. About an hour later the sweet young lady returned with her mother who profusely thanked us for being at Mint Hill Madness and for making her daughter so excited and happy. Needless to say we mentioned Jr. Rockhounds to both mom and dad and gave them an application. All in all I was glad I had been out-voted and all that rain didn't seem so bad after all.

If you've never worked one of these events you're really missing a great experience. See you there next year!

*Murray Simon - Exemplary Hamburger Flipper, Culinary Connoisseur of Fine Geodes, Prime Intercessor, and President of the Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club.*



## *Notice*

**There is NO pre-meeting jewelry class in October  
Linda will be in Virginia that week and not available.**

# *Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club Monthly Meeting*

**October 20th, 2011 Thursday -- 7:00 pm --**

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

## *EMERALDS OF HIDDENITE*

*by Ed Speer*

Ed Speer is a North Carolina geologist with world-wide experience in gold and diamond exploration. Recently he has been involved in some of the spectacular emerald discoveries at Hiddenite. This presentation was first given in 2008 at the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America. It covers all the big emeralds ever found at Hiddenite, the history of the mining, the geology of the veins, discovering pockets with emeralds and recovering the emeralds. There will be lots of mineral photos, including emeralds. Signed copies of his emerald book will be available for purchase. Ed is a mineral enthusiast and enjoys meeting collectors.

His emerald website will give you a taste of the presentation [www.NorthCarolinaEmeralds.info](http://www.NorthCarolinaEmeralds.info)

His Resume & work history can be found at: [www.SpeerMinerals.com](http://www.SpeerMinerals.com)

## *Important FIRST Notification*

**In January of 2012 the *Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club*  
will be CHANGING meeting location.**

We will begin hosting our monthly meetings at the  
TYVOLA SENIOR CENTER  
2225 Tyvola Rd.  
Charlotte, NC

# *It was Mint Hill Mudnness and we were there!*

*by ron gibbs*

It was the best of times, it was the wettest of time. It was Mint Hill Madness as in, the real thing! We had sun, we had wind, we had water, we may have even had a bit of hail, and there was a little fun to boot. There was a parade with costumes, bands and even floats, there were carnival games and rides, and there were a the required vendors with “junk food”.



*so this is what “home” looks like for the weekend*

Charlotte Gem and Mineral Club participated in the festivities and it was the debut of our new sluice. We set up on Friday afternoon and worked until about 10 pm, then started again on Saturday morning working until Saturday night and the fireworks lit the sky.

We sold the smaller geodes and bags of goodies for our sluice, we divided up into cutters, assayers, sluice helpers, money takers, and a few wrappers. Depending on the time of day or night you might also be a “dumper” ... one who either helped keep the tent from becoming overloaded with water, or the sluice from becoming filled with gravel.



*the green uniform of the day*



*there was even room to sit and rest*

We had a reasonably good weekend taking in about \$1300 for our efforts. Not bad considering the amount of time it rained.

Special thanks goes to Jimmy for the much needed (and used) tent which kept us dry during the frequent down-pours. It had been extended in size and managed to cover us even when there were a dozen volunteers present.



*thanks to all the volunteers who did an amazing job*



A big thanks to everyone who donated their time and effort to make it a success. Not a bad “first try” and getting out “feet wet” in learning how to run a sluice.



*The sluice ran day and night (sometimes with a flashlight) -*



*putting away the identification tools*



*so what to do when it rains*



*"dumper in action"*



*some people wanted even more water than the rain supplied*



*the area behind the city hall was teeming with rides and games*



*Mint Hill Madness ends a final bang!*

# *November is the Annual Club Auction*

*by ron gibbs*

It's that time of year again and several things are now fixed on our schedule. November is the month for our annual club auction where members bring in their "extras" and we have a fun and often entertaining evening trying to figure-out what we can or can't live without.

Members bring their excess or extra items for sale and proceeds go to the club general fund. Member materials are often supplemented with other material donated in the past or given to the club by former members.

There are some special items this year that will be up for sale. Someone donated a good deal of lapidary equipment to our club and most of it will be up for sale on auction night. I have included a number of photos of the equipment. Although most of it has the older carbide based grinding wheels, the machines can be re-fitted with the newer diamond wheels and brought right up to date.

There will also be the usual array of slabs, minerals, fossils, jewelry, etc. etc. So come on out and have some fun at our auction this year and maybe walk away with a good deal on some heavy duty equipment.

This brings us to the following December meeting where the club will have it's annual holiday party. We are once again making arrangements to have it at the Amity Presbyterian Church. Watch next month for the date and mark it on your calenders.

It's also time to download a copy of the "club point sheet" from the WEB site. Members earn points throughout the year by donating their time for various events (Matthews Live, Mint Hill Madness) or for providing food for a meeting, giving a presentation to the club, or just showing up at monthly meeting. Those who accumulate sufficient points are placed in an end of year drawing for a couple of week long scholarships to Wild Acres or William Holland. The totalled pints should be submitted by the end of the November meeting. The winners will be announced at the holiday party.



*6" light duty trim saw*



*6" medium duty trim saw*



*8" heavy duty trim saw*



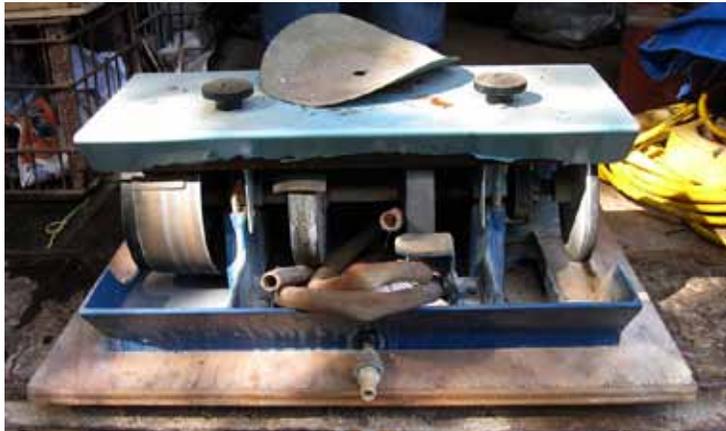
*6" combo unit with saw, grinding wheel, expanding drum, and spin on polish disk.*



*electric wax working carving tool & a cabochon dopping pot.*



*Graves faceting machine*



*large -heavy duty - cabochon cutting machine with room for two wheels, two expanding drums and spin-on polishing disk*



*Kregan ring roller*



*foredom motor tool*



*6" jewelry buffer with dust collector*



*centrifugal casting machine for lost wax with extra parts*



*8" very heavy duty cabbing unit. room for two grinding wheels, and two side by side expanding drums - with end polisher*

***An Official Field Trip of the Aiken Gem and Mineral Society  
(Aiken, SC) hosting club***

An Official Field Trip of the (Charlotte Gem & Mineral Club)

**9:00 AM TO 5:00PM**

**Saturday, November 5, 2011**

**GRAVES MOUNTAIN, Lincolnton, GA**

**Where:** Graves Mountain - off SR 378

**Assembly Time:** 9:00 am. Everyone off the mountain by 5:00 pm

**Accommodations:**

Cullars Inn, Lincolnton, GA: (706) 359-6161

Soap Creek Lodge, Clarks Hill Lake, Lincolnton: (706) 359-3124

Elijah Clark State Park: (706) 359-3458 / (800) 864-7275

**Directions:** From Washington, Georgia, drive 11 miles on SR-378, or from the Hardee□s in Lincolnton, Georgia, drive approximately 5-½ miles west on SR-378. Look for a sign at the entrance to Graves Mountain on the south side of the road.

**FEE:** \$5 or more per person donation to Clarence Norman, Jr., the mine□s caretaker. All DMC members must sign a liability release before being allowed onto the mountain. No children under age 12 permitted due to the dangerous steep cliffs. All children 12 and over must be supervised by an adult.

**Collecting:** Beautiful lazulite, pyrophyllite, and kyanite; world class rutile can be found rarely. Over 50 different minerals can be unearthed in this extinct volcano and former mine, and now dig site for gem and mineral clubs and other organizations. Georgia Mineral Society has further details and photos on their website: <http://gamineral.org/commercial-sites.htm>

**Tools:** A hand truck to ferry buckets and hand tools to surface collect specimens. Backpack, gloves, 8-lb sledge, 2-4 lb crack hammer, rock hammer, pry bar, shovel, chisels, and SAFETY EYEWEAR are useful. Hard hat required if you plan to work adjacent to the high wall areas.

**Safety:** DMC Members must sign and adhere to the Graves Mountain Code of Conduct (see below). Doing so keeps everyone safe. Dress for the weather, and bring plenty of water and something to eat. There are no toilet facilities.

*Graves Mountain Code of Conduct!*

- o Park vehicles in the designated area only. No vehicles allowed beyond the parking area.*
- o No children under 12 allowed. All children must be supervised by an adult.*
- o All pets must be leashed and controlled.*
- o The caretaker, Junior Norman, has absolute say as to where you may safely work.*
- o Hand tools only! No power tools. No ladders.*
- o Stay away from all high walls.*
- o No repelling off of anything.*
- o Everyone must be off the mountain by dusk.*

**Field Trip Leader:**

**Contact: Shellie Newell, Aiken GMF**

**(803) 439-2625, shellienewell@att.net; www.aikengmfs.org**

***Tumbling to Polish Cabs***

by Rick Copeland,

*Pres, Colorado Springs Min. Society.*

I use vibratory tumblers to polish about 90% of my cabs. I rough out the cabs on a 100 grit lap. Then I put them into the vibratory tumbler with 150/220 grit with ceramic media and run it for a day or two. Then I clean it out and run it on 600 grit for a day or two. Then the cabs are cleaned with soap and water and put into a separate vibratory tumbler with tempered glass shards that have been through a 150/220 and 600 grit cycle to take the sharp edges off (you can also use ceramic media sold at jewelry supply websites and stores for tumble polishing jewelry). I use Tin Oxide for polish. I let it run for at least 3 days, usually 5 or more.

I use a spray bottle to add water so as not to add too much. I start the tumbler and give it 4 or 5 squirts of water. Then I add a couple of tablespoons of Tin Oxide and watch the action. When it slows down, I give it 4 or 5 squirts. Once it's rolling pretty good, I add another two tablespoons of Tin Oxide. Again I watch the tumbling action and when it slows down, I give it another 4 to 5 squirts. You want the Tin Oxide to be covering your stones and media. Now let it run an hour and come back and check. If the rolling of the stones and media is sluggish or the paste Tin Oxide has a dull look to it, give it 4 to 5 squirts of water. You should have just a bit of white liquid showing on the inside edge of the bottom of the mass of stones and media.

The cabs come out with a better polish than if I went through the trouble of doing all the grinding and polishing by hand. And I can produce a lot of cabs with little effort. Just a few hours of grinding the cabs, then keeping tabs on the tumblers, and I'm free to do other things. There is a little rounding on where the back side meets the side edge. I do a pretty good job with roughing out the cabs so they don't require much tumbling. Some commercial cutters let the tumblers do a lot more of the work and that leads to more rounding which make the stones difficult to bezel set.

The stones I won't use the tumblers for are Natural Turquoise, Boulder Opal, Lapis, and any other high priced stone.

Posted on LapidaryList, Jan. 25,  
2008 via Blue Agate News, 2/08