



---

# ROCK SOLID

## NOVEMBER 2025 MONTHLY BULLETIN

A non-profit 501(c)3 group founded in March 1956, organized to educate the general public and members' knowledge of Mineralogy, Gems, Jewelry Making, Fossils and related earth sciences.

**MEETINGS:** The meetings are the first Thursday of each month except June, July, August and December. The Clubs annual holiday party is in mid-November and the annual picnic is in June which includes a silent auction. Visitors are always welcome.

The meetings are at Hope Chapel (formerly Indian Creek Community Church), 12480 Black Bob Road in Olathe, Kansas. Meeting times are from **6:00 to 8:45** and we must be out of the building by 9:00. We meet on the lower level in room **018**. 6:00 to 7:00 is not structured, as member's fellowship and have a raffle. At the end of the raffle anyone who purchased tickets - and did not win anything - can go take one item from the table. The meeting starts at 7 PM followed by the guest speaker. Information is available at our website: [olathegemclub.org](http://olathegemclub.org)

DUES: \$15.00 per year for individuals / \$5.00 per year for minors / children under the age of 12 are free.  
(Due by May meeting, and delinquent by September meeting)

## **OFFICERS and CHAIRPERSONS 2025 – 2026:**

President: Norman Onnen (816)645-1333

Vice President: Vacant

Secretary: Alison Betts (913)962-9584

Treasurer: Barbara Crompton (913)492-6783

Website and Editor: Dan McDaniel (913)963-5357

Membership Chairman: Leslie Hartman (785)380-6016

Field Trip Coordinator: Leslie Hartman (785)380-6016

Field Trip Assistant: Larry Wells (913)787-5138

Programs: Norman Onnen

Librarian and Historian: Norman Onnen (816)645-1333

Gem Show Chairman: Norman Onnen

Raffle: Leslie Hartman

Association Delegates: Chet McLaughlin & Mandy Lorenz

Alternate Assoc. Delegates: Larry Wells

## **PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:**

The things you put off last fall so that you could do them during winter are still there. And now its November and winter is once more just around the corner so the “to do list” can become larger. That being said, let us enjoy this month which promises to be quite busy. First, we will participate in the fall gem and mineral show (Oct. 31 - Nov. 2), to be followed by our club meeting on Thursday, Nov. 6, and then our annual holiday party on Thursday, Nov. 20. A few days of rest and we can then appreciate the Thanksgiving weekend with friends and family.

For our Nov. club meeting we are once more excited to have OGMS member Tom Tiivol present, and exhibit, “Antique Jewelry” (and this is so timely considering the recent Louvre jewelry theft.) Tom spoke to us once before about antique jewelry and it is such a broad subject that members were eager to learn more — and this time we can also learn something about French Crown Jewels. As background, and for those who have yet to meet Tom he is a “highly respected jeweler in the Kansas City area, and a nationally acclaimed G.I.A. graduate gemologist, lecturer, and teacher. He has been buying and selling diamonds, colored gemstones, pearls, to clients around the United States for 35 years. He authored and teaches his course in Gemology and Appraisal Ethics at the University of Kansas and founded his firm, Ton Tivol Jewels, this following his early years of his career in his family’s retail jewelry business serving as the President from 1989- 2004. In his business he specializes in core jewelry products which include diamonds, colored gemstones, classic and fashion cultured pearls, antique and estate jewelry, and custom design pieces.” (From LinkedIn)



*A- Tom Tivol Presenting to OGMS March 2023*

A reminder that our club does not meet in December of each year (that allows time for us to begin on the procrastinated to do lists). For our January (2026) meeting we are pleased to have scheduled Dr. Jennifer Raff to present her research on early man. She, a PhD in Anthropology and Genetics professor of Anthropology at KU, is the author of the book “Origin.”

Also, please note that our January 2026 OGMS club meeting will occur **on Jan. 8, 2026, the second Thursday of the month**, (instead of the first Thursday because of the New Year's Day holiday).

### **Quick notes (G&M Show and OGMS Holiday Party)**

A reminder that members who have signed up for sales tables for the Oct. 31 - Nov. 2, 2025 Gem and Mineral Show should arrive at the KCI Expo Center **no earlier than noon** on Thursday, Oct. 30 to check in with Leslie Hartman to be assigned their floor and table(s) space.

OGMS members are reminded that their club membership cards allow for free access to the G&M Show.

For the Nov. 20, 2025 OGMS holiday party a sign-up sheet is currently active. Members will be able to sign up at the Nov. 6 club meeting, AND via the email sent out on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Another email will be sent out by November 8<sup>th</sup> to the membership with the signup form. At present we have 27 individuals signed up and expect about 50. So that the food order can be finalized, we must have sign-ups no later than Nov. 16.

### **Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies Congress Meeting**

Was it interesting? You bet. The RMFMS gathered on Sept. 19 - 21, 2025 with clubs and state organizations for the annual Congressional meeting in Grand Junction, Colorado. The city was as intriguing as the meeting. Grand Junction was the original town but at least six other communities were formed surrounding it and it gradually grew together, but not peacefully. Two of the communities wanted to be in Utah and since they were 25 to 30 miles away, named their streets 25th thru 30th with colorful names in between roads 25-1/3 or 27-3/4, etc. None of the communities gave up their naming protocol and none had their streets meet with any other communities. Going east-west was okay but going north-south was an adventure taking you into at least 3 cities and multiple untimed traffic lights. Even the police have to use Google if they leave their jurisdictions. Talk about independent folks.

Sept. 19th started with a field trip for the fossil hunters. They went about 40 miles east to a site on BLM land that had multiple sites with Eocene insect and [giant fossils in the Green River Formation. They spent about 3 hours and came back with interesting materials. In the afternoon we met at the Grand Junction Gem and Mineral Club clubhouse and it is marvelous. A large meeting room with display shelves and cases around the perimeter with beautiful donations from at least 30 members with every type of stone imaginable. The clubhouse is the property of the Club with two additional buildings housing equipment to work with fossils or rocks, your choice. The rest of the afternoon was free while the locals set up their annual show at the Mesa County Fairgrounds. We drove up the 2000-foot-high Colorado National Monument which overlooks the Colorado River and the plains beyond. Amazing gorges and vistas.

Sept. 20th started with a field trip for yellow cat agate. We drove about 60 miles and went south into Utah and up a volcanic area which were on roads impassible except for high clearance vehicles. We parked at the foot of a volcano that rose about 300 to 400 feet on challenging slopes. The agate was mainly small chips of red and yellow crystalline quartz and occasionally petrified wood which had little color. Some folks dug furiously getting a piece of wood out and I have no idea how they got it down the slopes. I climbed to the top of the volcano and filled my bucket on the way down. The bucket carried me down the last 100 feet because I could not slow down. The formal meeting took place in the clubhouse which seemed even more spectacular as you sat and gazed at the fabulous rocks around you. Like a museum. They have over 100 active members and go on field trips to Utah, Nevada, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Arizona. Eat your heart out. The meeting was formal. Members formally registered and introduced. New officers were nominated and elected. Plans for next year's meeting in Tulsa were approved, etc. but then came the surprise. The club has a dump out back where they dispose of rocks they do not want to work with. We were invited to take what we wanted. People were polite to a point running to get their buckets and head for the dump. It was incredible, wood, crystals, fossils, obsidian, colorful rocks I could not identify, etc. People pulled their pickups and RV's up to the dump and filled multiple buckets or just threw material in their vehicles. We nearly emptied the dump and it was the hit of the party. Later that evening we went to the banquet at the Redlands Community Center which was nice but not as nice as the clubhouse. The awards and recognition of the Grand Junction folks were made. Very congenial.

On Sept. 21 the field trip was to a site much closer to Grand Junction on 25 road. It featured concretions with visible veins of barite bugs or calcite crystals. After the frenzied dump event not a lot of folks had room for more rocks but those that went found interesting items many of which they had to dig up and chip out. At the same time the annual CJGMC show was on at the Mesa County Fairgrounds which featured local and national vendors, contests, and demonstrations. It was a fitting conclusion to a wonderful weekend and worth attending.

*Chet McLaughlin, OGMS Delegate to the RMF  
2025 Congress.*

### **Yellow Cat Agate**

One of the field trips offered to attendees of the RMF Congress was to visit a relatively nearby area in Utah featuring yellow cat agate (including agatized barite grape clusters). The sites (about 4-5 adjacent sites listed in the guides) are easily accessed in mostly high clearance 4-wheel drive vehicles is just 5 miles south of I-70, and so is convenient to travelers going across Utah - - and as this is the only E-W highway across the state in the area, everyone passes nearby - - but there are no services available. Yellow cat agate is described on line as Jurassic aged (201-145 million years ago) petrified wood (thereby younger than the Triassic aged (251-201 million years ago) petrified wood in Petrified National Park). As



*B Chet McLaughlin Specimen*

such this is not seam or nodular agate, and the specimens I've seen clearly exhibit wood striations, especially along the edges. Of significant interest to collectors are specimens showing a range of colors from mostly red, to yellow, orange, and blue. The more contrasting color the more desirable for collectors. Polished pieces and small slabs are found for sale online; however, I have seen no examples of jewelry being made and offered of this material.

While the site(s) are close to I-70 and accessible, collectors should be cognizant of risks associated with the area. Numerous seeps are contaminated with arsenic and multiple old uranium mines cover these collecting sites. In fact, one location is labeled "Poison Strip" and there are warnings for the region to "not lick the rocks." (Should any rockhound need to be warned of this no matter where they are collecting?) (Sources: Rockhounding Utah and Gem Trails of Utah). N. Onnen

### **FIELD TRIPS:**

No field trips are scheduled at this time, but depending on the weather, a determination may be made to schedule one. If so, an email will be sent out to all members.

If you have any ideas for a field trip, please let me know by email or text [lhartman.12345@gmail.com](mailto:lhartman.12345@gmail.com) or 785-380-6016. Lesliee

### **NEWS, VIEWS AND REVIEWS**

#### **Louvre Gem Heist**

Stolen from the Louvre's Galerie d'Apollon (Gallery of Apollo) on Sunday, October 19, 2025, were 9 priceless Royal Jewels from the First and Second French Empires (1 item was recovered and 8 are still missing per Intepol). The items dating back to France's 19th-century royalty are encrusted with thousands of diamonds and other precious gemstones. The one item that was recovered was the crown once belonging to Empress Eugenie. It had been dropped and damaged to some degree as the four intruders escaped.

Stolen were -

Emerald earrings from Marie-Louise's Parure; First French Empire  
Emerald necklace from Marie-Louise's Parure; First French Empire  
Sapphire earrings of Queens Marie-Amelie and Hortense; First French Empire  
Sapphire necklace of Queens Marie-Amelie and Hortense; First French Empire  
Sapphire Diadem of Queens Marie-Amelie and Hortense; First French Empire  
Diamond Bow Brooch of Empress Eugenie; Second French Empire  
Diadem of Empress Eugenie; Second French Empire  
Reliquary Brooch; Second French Empire (AKA Brooch Reliquarie)  
Crown belonging to Empress Eugenie (Recovered)

**INTERPOL**

**19 October 2025**

**MAJOR THEFT FROM THE LOUVRE MUSEUM'S APOLLON GALLERY IN PARIS, FRANCE**

**9 Priceless Royal Jewels from the First and Second French Empires**

**1 item recovered, 8 still missing**

If you have any information about the theft or current location of these objects, please contact :

**INTERPOL General Secretariat**  
(Lyon, France)

[WWW.INTERPOL.INT](http://WWW.INTERPOL.INT)

**Empress Eugenie's Diamond Bow Brooch**  
Second French Empire  
Ref.: 2025/359.3

**Diadem of Empress Eugénie**  
Second French Empire  
Ref.: 2025/359.8

**Emerald Earrings from Marie-Louise's Parure**  
First French Empire  
Ref.: 2025/359.6

**Emerald Necklace from Marie-Louise's Parure**  
First French Empire  
Ref.: 2025/359.4

**Sapphire Earrings of Queens Marie-Amelie and Hortense**  
First French Empire  
Ref.: 2025/359.7

**Sapphire Necklace of Queens Marie-Amelie and Hortense**  
First French Empire  
Ref.: 2025/359.2

**Sapphire Diadem of Queens Marie-Amelie and Hortense**  
First French Empire  
Ref.: 2025/359.1

**Reliquary Brooch**  
Second French Empire  
Ref.: 2025/359.5

Objects featured in the INTERPOL Stolen Works of Art database, ref. 2025/359

The Reliquary Brooch is a very interesting piece in that it contains, among others, the Sancy Diamond and the Mirror of Portugal diamond. The Sancy Diamond is touted as being one of the most legendary of all diamonds, almond-shaped, faceted on both sides (like a large bead), and known as the “double rose.” The Mirror of Portugal is somewhat of a mystery. It along with the Sancy diamond had been stolen several times, passed through many hands and empires, sold, traded, etc., and in the book “Legendary Gems or Gems that Made History” it is stated many times that the stone remains unaccounted for - - that in spite of the book including a photo of the Reliquary Brooch with the caption indicating the stone is a part of the piece. N Onnen

### Speaking of Diamonds

So when is a diamond, not a diamond in today’s world? It depends upon who is collecting them apparently. There’s Herkimer diamonds, Pecos diamonds, Tibetans, Pakimers, Suquemers (from PA), etc. (which are not diamonds at all, but quartz crystals for the collectors). And now from an obscure collection are found Odell “diamonds”. Again, these are not diamonds, and in this case are not even quartz, but in fact are barite crystals south-central Nebraska. Found in the Dakota shale outcrop, these specimens have become rare in that the site is now largely underneath Diamond Lake just west of Odell, NE. The name of the lake



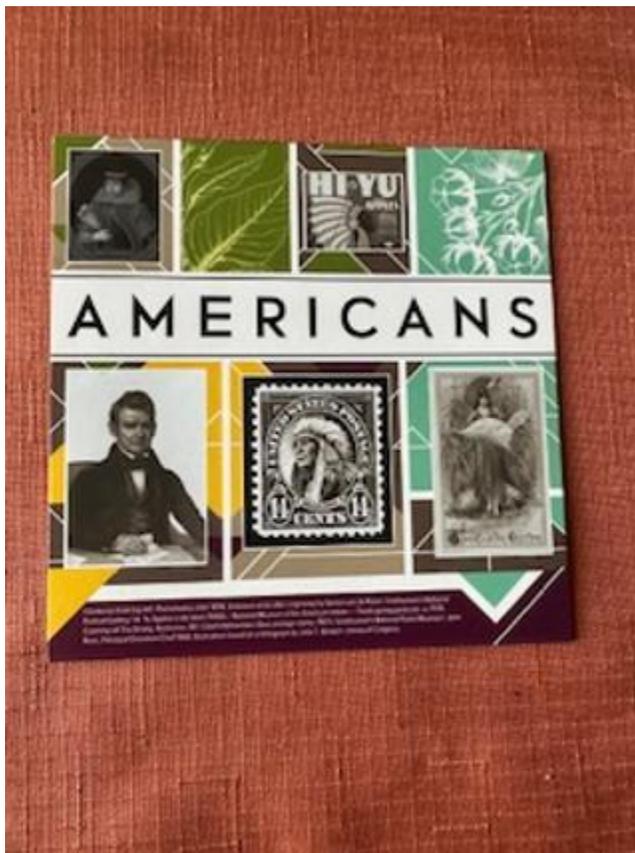
*C - Odell Diamonds (Nebraska)*

perpetuates the myth.

For those wishing to try to find these “diamonds” and beat the odds, beware that there are three Diamond Lakes in NE. This one is in SE Nebraska, along highway 9, and now a part of Diamond Lake Wildlife Management Area which has restrictions for hunting wildlife and camping (but does not mention collecting the elusive “diamonds”). N. Onnen

### “Americans” Smithsonian Exhibit

For those who were unable to view the important Smithsonian exhibit entitled “Americans” in Lawrence last month, all is not lost. The rotating exhibit has moved to Highland, KS (then to Wichita, Mayetta, Salina and Liberal), and will finally be on display in Bonner Springs at the Wyandotte County Historical Museum from May 30 to July 5, 2026 before returning to D.C.



Did you know that the Battle of the Little Bighorn (Custer’s Last Stand) was the result of the government disregarding treaties of multiple tribes (forcing tribes into reservations and areas already promised to other tribes, and the takeover of the Black Hills when gold was discovered there).? To that end, in 1980 the Supreme Court (United States v. Sioux Nation) ruled that the Lakota Sioux were entitled to \$106 million for the “taking of tribal property with regard to the Black Hills.” The tribe has refused the settlement “as no amount of money could compensate for the loss of their sacred land.” The money is held in the U.S. Treasury and with interest is now worth more than \$1 billion dollars. (Of the 370 treaties signed between the 1780s and 1880s, “Not a single pact between the federal government and the Indian nations has been preserved in its entirety.” *Gila: The Life and Death of an American River*. Gregory McNamee, 1994).

The fact the exhibit will be in Bonner Springs on July 4, 2026, the 250th anniversary of the United States, should be an interesting situation. N. Onnen

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Upcoming Events and Shows**

If you have interest in any of the shows listed here, please check the status of the shows and promoter notices. (For a more complete regional and national listing, visit [ROCKNGEM.COM](http://ROCKNGEM.COM))

**Oct 31 – Nov 2** – KC Gem and Mineral show, KCI Expo Center, 11730 NW Ambassador Dr., Kansas City, MO

**Nov 1, 2** – 70th Annual Omaha Gem Jewelry and Mineral Show. Omaha, NE. Liberty First Credit Union Arena. 7300 Q St., Ralston, NE <https://nerockgem.org/annual-gem-and-mineral-show>

**Nov 6** – OGMS Club Meeting

**Nov 20** – OGMS Holiday Party

**December** – No Club Meeting

**Jan 8** – OGMS Club Meeting – **Please Note:** Due to New Years Day is the first Thursday in January, Our Meeting will be on the Second Thursday of January.

**Feb 5** – OGMS Club Meeting

**Mar 13 - 15** – KC Gem and Mineral Show. **Please Note:** No OGMS Club meeting in March