



ROCK SOLID

MARCH 2026 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

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:

First things first! Fast approaching is our **64th Annual KC Gem & Mineral Show on March 13-15, 2026.**

We need volunteers to assist:

- 1) at the Admissions Booth (Contact Kara Paris threetrails@sbcglobal.net),
- 2) the Silent Auction (contact Leslie Hartman lhartman.12345@gmail.com),
- 3) the Association Booth (contact April Buettner apriljoykc1@yahoo.com),
- 4) the Hospitality Room (contact Dan Johnson gdj102356@hotmail.com),
- 5) and the Fluorescent Room (contact Dan Snow SnowXSnow@outlook.com)
- 6) - - as well as the set up and tear down on Wed., March 11 and Sunday, March 15 respectively (contact Bruce Stinemetz brucestinemetz@att.net)

Please help beat the last-minute rush by selecting an area and time in which to help, and then by contacting the person identified to set up a time and date that you are willing and able to assist. Also, our club places individual display cases each year showing members rocks, minerals, fossils, collections, skills, and interests. Currently we have two spare club display cases available to be borrowed for your use at this show if you are interested. If so, please contact me ASAP to reserve either or both cases. (Our club benefits financially for each case displayed) (Contact Norm

Onnen onnene@kc.rr.com). For those who have their own cases, but are not intending to display this year, please let me know so that we might be able to loan the case(s) to another member.

Presently we have 13 cases committed, and we anticipate we will be able to place 20+ this year. Thanks to all that participate in this effort.

As a reminder to our members, guests, and visitors, since we are involved in the March G&M Show, we do not host a club meeting in March. We look forward to seeing each of you at our Thursday, April 2, 2026 club meeting as presentation will be "Kansas Fossils" by Andrew Connolly from the Kansas Geological Survey. In addition, a potential late March field trip is being worked on. (Please watch for emails concerning the possible trip).

February 5th OGMS Club Meeting Re-cap

At our February club meeting we had over 50 OGMS members, guests and visitors who were treated to a most interesting broad presentation by recent members Lydia and Roger Cline concerning the tribal history and use of stones,



Some of the Clines NA Jewelry

shells, and other objects by Southwestern Native Americans (NA's) for spiritual and personal adornment. Over time, (beginning in the mid-to late 1800s), this developed into the NA jewelry development and industry for jewelry we see today. Discussed was the early trading of stones, bones, shells, silver, etc., the development of silversmithing, and the eventual incorporation of turquoise and other items into jewelry, which eventually morphed into the present-day industry to satisfy a tourist trade and the economic needs of the various tribes made up of the Pueblos and Navajos. The Cline's shared information about shopping for and identifying authentic NA jewelry, their family excursion to collect turquoise at an actual working mine in Nevada, and exhibited several pieces of fine jewelry items they have acquired and often wear. Of particular interest was the discussion of how the industry is threatened by knock-offs and the importation of imitation NA jewelry from China and the Philippines. Buyer beware! Thank you to the Cline's for sharing the story of your interests and passion.

Side Notes Concerning Native Americans (NS) Interests

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art is hosting the annual free Native American Cultural Festival on Sunday, March 1, 2026 from 10am to 4pm. (Tipi raising is scheduled for 4:30pm - 5:15 pm, Friday, Feb. 27). The program is subject to change. Parking is \$14 (free for Museum members). Featured for portions will be Chief Bad War Cloud who Emceed at the KU Pow Wow last spring.

On March 27 the KC National Museum of Toys and Miniatures will have a grand opening of the "Native Arts in Miniature" exhibit. NA singer and song writer Bad Alaskan will be entertaining. Other more specific information may be found on their website. toyandminiaturemuseum.org/

*Casa Grande Ruins Natl Monument Coolidge AZ
(Very deceptive scale)*

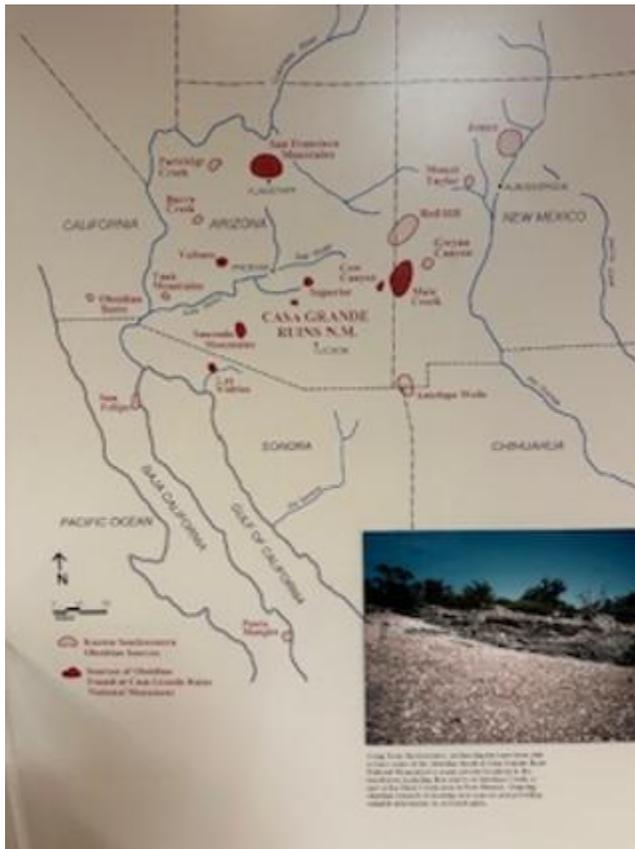


Casa Grande and Obsidian Research

Part of the benefit of surface travel to and from the annual Tucson Gem and Mineral Show is the opportunity to stop along the way to collect rocks and visit interesting places. This year was no different in that in addition to other attractions, a visit to the Casa Grande Ruins National Monument (about half-way between Phoenix and Tucson just off of I-10) was convenient. This monument, showcasing the massive masonry structures of the Hohokum (Ancestral Sonoran Desert People) which was built about 1350 CE, is contained on a 1 square mile site (protected by President Benjamin Harrison in 1892, thus setting up the first prehistoric and cultural reserve established in the US). These very early inhabitants were agricultural-based and built numerous canals along the Gila River, but left no written record of their existence. What they did leave however were the large earthen buildings, red-on-buff pottery and a system of fields and canals for

irrigation between numerous “villages” - all within sight of each other. The 4-story tall Casa Grande structure represents the sole remaining building of this culture; however, the extensive site contains many foundations and berms of many other structures which are presently being studied. Presumably, most of the structures were of modest height and constituted use for habitation and normal everyday functions. The actual purpose of the existing protected structure is unknown and is of significant interest to researchers as to its use, method of construction, etc. It apparently only had one or two interior floors and must have been constructed from scaffolding. Walls at the base were 4-feet thick and there is no indication of stairs from level to level, so except for surface level doors for entry, it is probable ladders were used in the interior.

Casa Grande Ruins - Obsidian Potential Sources



An interesting aspect of this attraction is the ongoing research trying to locate sources of obsidian these people used in crafting their tools, knives, ornaments, burial objects and weapons. Using a modern laboratory procedure called X-ray fluorescence, researchers are analyzing the chemical content of the obsidian crafted items on site and can establish the original multiple sources of the material. And, as a bonus, this suggests routes by which it was traded, thus helping understand the culture and association with other groups. It turns out that the Hohokum were probably a part of significant trade routes between the Baja/Pacific coast, Mexico, the Mogollon peoples to the East, and the Anasazi to the North.

And More on Obsidian

Obsidian is a silica-rich natural glass (a part of the rhyolite family) which occurs as crusts on lava flows, as ejected pieces, or as layers on volcanic domes. (There are also less silica rich varieties, i.e., trachytic, andesitic and photoptic obsidians). Obsidian forms because of rapid cooling of the melted solution which contains trapped gases and up to 3% water. (If heated to 1,000 degrees C, the gases are driven off and the obsidian inflates to become pumice - - readily found along the mid-state border of NM and CO just south of the Spanish Peaks).

There are several types of obsidian, which include the black “Apache” tear, snowflake, mahogany, rainbow, sheen, fire, Macusanite, midnight lace, pumpkin, and green obsidians. There are no doubt multiple versions or legends concerning the name “Apache Tears,” however the most common is about 75 Apache Indians who in the 1880s were pursued by the US calvary and were trapped on a mountain near what is now Superior, AZ. After a battle in which reportedly 50 braves were slain, the remaining

25, rather than being captured, turned their horses and plunged to their deaths off Apache Leap Mountain. With that, supposedly, the Apache women, in their great grief, shed tears which the creator turned into black, glass-like obsidian stones. So, the story goes, and rockhounds take great pleasure in collecting and tumble polishing the obsidian nodules. Some feel that the tears provide a strong connection with lessons that are meant to be learned on Earth, and are strengthening, purifying, and grounding, offering protection from all negative and parasitic energies.”

Deming, NM and Rock Hound State Park

Traveling to or from Tucson on I-10, rockhounds would be remiss to not stop to learn and visit about Deming, NM, the home of Rock Hound State Park, the free Luna Mimbres Museum, and Baker Ranch thundereggs.

The 349-acre Rockhound State Park (one of two state parks that allows collecting, the other being Crater of Diamonds State Park in Arkansas) sits on the side of the 12-mile-long Florida Mountains just SE of Deming. This is actually two state parks in one - - the southern 3 miles (known as the Little Florida Mountains) just slightly separated is named Spring Canyon State Park. At the time of the parks establishment in 1966 visitors were encouraged to collect 15 pounds of thundereggs, semi-precious jasper, quartz crystals, etc., per day. As to be expected, over time the easier collecting has been exploited and now visitors are asked to only take a few samples per day. But all is not lost as the camp ground is highly desirable and overlooks the fabulous Little Florida peaks which while newer (Miocene age (23 million years ago) as opposed to Precambrian age (1.35 billion years ago) for the parent Florida portion of the range) offers numerous medium to advanced



*Baby Baker Ranch Geodes & Nodules
EON Collection; ex Flottman*

hiking opportunities.

A side story for the Little Florida peaks is that in 1979 the Iranian government gifted the US 27 Ibex goats (because the climate here on the peaks is similar to that in Iran). These very elusive animals now number between 600-700 goats and may occasionally be seen from the camp ground only in profile on the very high adjacent peaks. Controlled hunting was at one time permitted but believe has been discontinued due to the difficulty in being successful on the very rugged peaks.

Just 2 miles off the park sits the Basin Range Volcanics Geolapidary Museum, “home”/museum of sorts to Robert Paul Colburn, AKA "the geode kid" (now deceased) and Christopher Blackwell. Around the

outside of the structure (best described as being a shack), as well as inside, will be found piles of Baker Ranch agates, and other similar types of thundereggs. Colburn, later partnering with Blackburn, started out in the American NW collecting and studying thundereggs. Almost all of his significant collection (100s of pieces) was donated to the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum. These, along with a massive collection of Mimbres Indian pottery (not to be found in quantity anywhere else) should not be missed. Colburn and Blackwell were featured some time ago on the Discovery Channel (I believe interviewed by Kristian Gum?). The Blackwell "museum" remains open every day (except Wed. for some reason), where Blackwell lives and continues to sell thundereggs and eagerly talk about rocks - - and everything else. I stop by there each year to check on him, and always need to be prepared to have an excuse to depart at some moment or would be there for days.

In addition to the above, the Deming Gem and Mineral Society hosts an annual show (120 +/- vendors) with the added and much anticipated field trips to the "Big Diggings" and other sites - - about the only opportunity to self-collect the famous Baker Ranch thundereggs. Time wise, inconvenient to and from the Feb. Tucson show, this year the Deming show is March 12-15 (overlapping our KC show). Deming also has two very authentic Mexican restaurants (be prepared to indicate red or green selection for the sauce), a couple of rock shops (that seem to change hands often), easy/close access to the Cooke Range (for fluorite), and a day-trip to Lake Valley Historic Townsite and mine (once owned, in the 1880s, by famous paleontologist Edward Cope). This mine contained the "Bridal Chamber" silver room where a single piece of silver was removed valued at \$7,000 when silver was being sold for only \$1 per ounce. This piece was displayed at the 1882 World Exposition in Denver and its present existence is apparently lost to history.

(A related article "The Deming Luna Mimbres Museum" by Lapidary Hall of Fame inductee Helen Serras-Herman may be found in the Sept. 2016 issue of Rock & Gem magazine).

New OGMS Members (Jan - Feb 2026)

Bleil, Chuck	Gardner, KS	Interested in minerals and fossils
Duggan, Christabel	OPKS	Interested in "all" - rock polishing and rockhounding
Duggan, Stan	Olathe, KS	Interested in "all" - and rockhounding (respectfully)
Johnson, Nate	Louisburg, KS	Interested in ducks
Richardson, Teresa M.	KCKS	Interested in gem cutting, crystals and minerals
Skorupan, Angel	Olathe, KS	Interested in "all"
Skorupan, Darrin	Olathe, KS	Interested in "all"
Wilson, Julie	Springhill, KS	Interested in "all" and field trips and geodes
Young, Daniel	Louisburg, KS	Interested in rocks

FIELD TRIPS:

Copper Valley Mine: On May 16th we will have a field trip to the Copper Valley Mine. I need to know by April 16th if you will be going, after April 16th you will not be put on the list. These are the rules of the copper mine. For more information on this field trip, please see the February 2026 Rock Solid Bulletin olathegemclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Febbul2026.pdf.

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

NEWS, VIEWS AND REVIEWS

Rare Earth Elements and Critical Minerals

At our OGMS club meeting in Nov. 2021 we heard a presentation by (then KU's) Dr. Franek Hasiuk concerning the search funded by a federal grant for rare earth elements and critical minerals in Kansas and other Midwest states. Fast forward, the investigations and search for rare earth elements and critical minerals has taken a turn becoming a most internationally important and publicized effort. And, it has become the center of tariff and trade negotiations between the US and China - the world's two largest economies. China has over decades heavily invested in developing the related mining and the processing infrastructure, giving it a near-monopoly on most of these commodities. Now these rare earth metals have become more important for use in military, electronics, and the fast evolution of AI. China, in April 2025, placed export restrictions on the rare earth metals to which the US negotiated a 90-day truce. The status of that truce is presently unclear.

With that, under duress, research is quickly evolving in efforts to predict where in the US to find these elements and minerals, and to better predict the tremendous costs, timing, methods, etc., at mining, processing, and using these materials independent of Chinese and other foreign influences. Currently the US's only major rare earth mine is at Mountain Pass, CA and the Defense Department has acquired a 15% stake in this operation which yields only neodymium and praseodymium.

One of many research efforts in the US is identifying underground horizons of rare earth element enrichment. This effort focuses on target horizons and ancient weathering profiles in which fossil soils (paleosoils) have formed as acidic waters which have infiltrated downward thus weathering smectitic claystones to kaolinite. This, via of leaching rare earth elements and other mobile elements, are found to concentrate immediately below lignites (a coal that is intermediate between peat and bituminous coal). (Geo News; July 2025).

There are currently more than 50 minerals that have been classified as critical. Of these the following twelve are considered most important to national and economic security - -

Graphite (a true mineral)

Cobalt, Gallium, Germanium, Lithium, Manganese and Nickel (basic elements)

Iridium and Palladium (platinum-group elements)

Dysprosium, Neodymium and Praseodymium (true rare earth elements)

In Kansas, potential critical minerals may eventually be found in 1) deposits of black shales and thin coal beds (in eastern KS), 2) brine, gas production, volcanic ash, salt, and zinc-lead ores (in SE KS), and 3) lamproites in Woodson and Wilson Counties. (KGS; 2025) A related document, "Coalbed gas play emerges in eastern Kansas basins" may be relevant - - and touches Missouri coalbeds by proximity as well.

(Dr. Franek Hasiuk is now a Principal Research Geologist at Sandia National Laboratories, where he applies his skills in the geochemical and petrophysical analysis of rocks to various projects in subsurface energy, geologic and stored hydrogen, nuclear waste, geothermal, lithium, carbon storage, salt,

and materials. His work at KU included ExxonMobil Upstream Research, through Iowa State University, and the Kansas Geological Survey. - - - *And, for those OGMS members who go to Tucson each year, Franek's aunt is Jean Barkley, a long time and very welcoming member of the Old Pueblo Lapidary Club. Just mention that you know Franek. if and when you attend that show.*) N Onnen

The Oldest House in the World???

Near Medicine Bow, Wyoming exists a cabin made from dinosaur bones. The builder was trying to attract people driving by in cars to procure gas at his gas pumps and decided to build this unique cabin. What a unique idea! To learn more about this cabin, use the following link. D McDaniel

wyoshpo.wyo.gov/index.php/programs/national-register/wyoming-listings/view-full-list/436-fossil-cabin

Odd's n Ends

Mars average temperature is -68 degrees C. Its atmosphere is 95% carbon dioxide, 3% nitrogen and 2% mixture of other gases (no mention of oxygen). It is hard to understand why anyone could afford to and would want to colonize and try to live there.

Uranus and Venus are the only two planets that rotate clockwise. Does anyone have any idea why this is the case?

A dinosaur crashed his car. Talk about tyrannosaurus wrecks! 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 ROCKGEM.COM)

Mar 13 - 15 64th Annual Kansas City Gem and Mineral Show. KCI Expo Center **Please Note:** No OGMS Club meeting in March

Apr 2 – OGMS Club Meeting - "Kansas Fossils" by Andrew Connolly from the Kansas Geological Survey

Apr 4,5 – Lincoln Gem and Mineral Show <https://www.lincolngemmineralclub.org/happenings/annual-show>

Apr 18,19 – Northwest Arkansas Gem and Mineral Society Show, Bentonville, AR <https://nwarockhounds.com/>

Apr 24 – 26 Wichita Gem and Mineral Show <https://wichtigemandmineralsociety.org/show/>

May 1 – 3 McPherson Gem and Mineral Annual Show, McPherson, KS <https://www.mgmc.club/>

May 7 – OGMS Club Meeting

Jun 5,6 – Springfield Rock & Gem Fair, Springfield, MO <https://ogms.rocks/events/>

June 27 – OGMS Picnic

Jul 9 – 12 – RMF Congress, Tulsa, OK

Jul 10 – 12 – Tulsa Rock and Mineral Society Rock, Gem, Mineral & Jewelry Show. Tulsa, OK. Exchange Center at Expo Square, 4145 E. 21st St., Tulsa, OK 74114 <https://tulsarockandmineralsociety.org/>

Sep 26,27 – Omaha Gem and Mineral Show, 1046 West Lincoln St, Papillion NE nerockgem.org/annual-gem-and-mineral-show.html

Sept – Mozarkite G&M Show, Lincoln, MO 3rd weekend of September at The Lincoln City Park (Exact Date TBD) <https://www.mozarkite.org/general-4>

Nov 6 – 8 – 47th Annual KC Shows of Integrity G&M Show; KCI Expo Center