

The Lake George Gem and Mineral Club -

Club News,
August, 2011



Regular Meeting of the Lake George Gem & Mineral Club
Saturday, August 13, 2011, at 9:00AM
Lake George Community Center

It's again time for our annual Gem and Mineral Show. Please attend our short business meeting at the Lake George Community Center at 9 AM on Saturday, August 13. After that, we'll stake out the field. If we have the normal number of volunteers, it is usually finished in about an hour and a half. Then we'll go across the street for pizza and discussion. If the weather is decent, we could try a quick nearby field trip for pegmatite digs.

We'll also have a signup sheet at the meeting for persons to be at the LGGM Club booth to give mineral specimens to kids plus answer questions from dealers and the public. On Tuesday through Thursday (Aug. 16-18), it will just be a matter of checking in dealers and helping them to find their space. Friday through Sunday will be the actual show days with the public, and we'll need help for the show booth in addition to assisting with parking directions.

Because of the competing show in Woodland Park the same weekend, we have lost dealers and may only have around 15-20 dealers at this show. Let's show them and show the public that THIS is the show to attend and I hope we'll have more dealers back next year. —John Rakowski

Editor's Note: Please see the *new* trip planned for **August 6** (in our Club News, below).

Coming Events

Columbine Gem & Mineral Society monthly meeting, 6:30PM, Mt. Shavano Manor, 525 W. 16th (at J St.), Salida. ... **August 11**

Annual Continental Divide Tailgate (CONTINTAIL), Buena Vista Rodeo Grounds; call 720-938-4194 for information. ... **Aug. 12-15**

Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society monthly meeting, 7:30PM, Colorado Springs Senior Center, 1514 N. Hancock. ... **August 18**

Pueblo Rockhounds monthly meeting, 7:30PM, Westminster Presbyterian Church, 10 University Circle. ... **August 18**

Lake George Gem & Mineral Club Annual Mineral Show, next to the Lake George Post Office. Free parking and admission. (Jump Start begins Aug. 16) (Jump-Start begins at 9:00AM, Tues., Aug. 16) ... **Aug. 19-21**

Alma Geostudy Presentations at Alma ... **Sept. 10-11**
Lake George Gem and Mineral Club **August, 2011**

Symposium: Minerals of Russia , Petroleum Hall, Green Center, CSM, Golden (contact pmodreski@usgs.gov for info)	... Sept. 10
CSM Geology Museum Open-House, Reception, and Silent Auction , 6-9 PM, CSM Geology Museum, 13 th and Maple Sts., Golden	... Sept. 14
Denver Coliseum Show , 9-6 daily, 1900 44 th St. (from I-70, exit 275B at Brighton Blvd.; free parking & admission) (go to http://coliseumshow.com/ for info)	... Sept. 10-18
Colorado Mineral & Fossil Show , Holiday Inn-Denver Central, 4849 Bannock St. (free parking & admission)	... Sept. 14-18
Denver Gem & Mineral Show and Colorado Fossil Show , Denver Merchandise Mart, I-25 at 58 th Ave. (admission charge)	... Sept. 16-18

Club News

Welcome, New Members:

Joseph Wyka & Family (Florissant), *and* **Thomas Graham** (Cripple Creek)

◆◆ Vice President and field-trip director **Dan Alfrey** has a great and ever-expanding field-trip line-up. Here's the latest list; please visit our website often for updates, and, remember, you must be a Lake George Gem & Mineral Club member to attend trips.

August 6: **New Trip:** Gold panning north of Lake George. Meet at 9AM at Happy Meadows Campground, 3 miles north of Lake George; contact lowminer@msn.com for details.

August 13: Lake George Gem & Mineral **Show Set-Up**, 9 AM; meet at Lake George Community Center. **Free pizza for volunteers!**

August 27: **Hartsel** petrified wood (not barite!) Meet at Ba

September 3: Trip to **Devil's Hole mine**, near Texas Creek. **Very limited;** trip involves a 5-mile ride on rough roads followed by a long up-hill hike. Contact Bob Carnein ccarnein@gmail.com if interested in going.

September 10: **GeoStudy presentations** (Alma); also **Sedalia mine** (with Columbine Club; more info later)

September 24: **Holcim quarry;** meet 8AM in Florence

October 1: **Patience club claim** (8AM)

If you'd like to lead a trip or have a suggestion for one, contact Dan at 719-440-6234.

◆◆ I'm happy to report the following awards that were announced at the annual meeting of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (this is the **national** competition):

Members **Bob Carnein, Andy Weinzapfel, and our Pebble Pups**, received prizes, as follows:

Bob Carnein: Second Place, Original Adult Article/Advanced (article appeared in our newsletter 4/10);

Andy Weinzapfel: Honorable Mention (article that appeared in "Hounds Tale" 3/10);

Pebble Pups: Third Place, Junior Articles, 12-17 (article appeared in our newsletter).

In addition, our newsletter placed 9th in the national competition (after apparently placing first in the Rocky Mountain Federation competition, though I still haven't received any official word).

◆◆ The July 9 meeting was held at the Lake George Community Center at 9:00AM, with about 40 members in attendance. You should have received Secretary **Charlene DeVries'** official minutes of the meeting, but here are some highlights: **John Rakowski** announced that we are

past the "break even" point on show registration, with enough dealers as of now to provide our Annual Scholarship once more! **Dick Lackmond** and others reported on the latest progress with the lapidary workshop, which is going great guns. It's currently available one night a month, but members wishing to use it at other times can contact Dick or other members of the committee. Dick showed off a great sobbelly agate from the Creede trip. Dick also reported attending the Rocky Mountain Federation annual meeting in Colorado Springs, where several members received awards. **Dan Alfrey** reminded members of the "Smoky Dog" (thanks to **Joe Dorris**) claim trip scheduled for July 16. After the meeting, members split up to visit either **Rich Fretterd's** Petra Placer topaz mine or the Courtney Marie claim.

◆◆ From the Smoky Dog claim, here are some pictures taken by **Dick Lackmond**:



◆◆ From the Petra Placer claim, here are photos from Dan Alfrey:



*Two prize Topaz were found, one pristine clear one & one brilliant blue one. **Thanks Rich !!!***

◆◆ Our prayers go out to Marge Breth, who had eye surgery at Penrose Hospital recently. Marge still plans to help Steve at the September festivities in Alma and is entered in an art contest in Victor in August.

◆◆ For more September festivities, Steven Veatch sent in the following announcement:

Colorado Preservation's Annual Heritage Event
Celebrating Preservation & Preservationists in Colorado's Communities

~ *On The Road in the South Park National Heritage Area* September 9 - 11, 2011

~ *Annual Membership Meeting* September 9, 2011
Lake George Gem and Mineral Club

August, 2011

On The Road 2011 in the South Park National Heritage Area will explore the beautiful natural resources and dynamic history of mining, railroading and ranching. We'll visit Tarryall Natural Rural Landscape District and the towns of Como, Fairplay and Alma. Special events include the South Park Plein Air Arts Celebration.

For more info, contact Susan Livingston slivingston@coloradopreservation.org (303)893-4260.

◆◆ **Dick Lackmond** reports that **John Rakowski** donated a motor to use with the cabochon machine; we still need some bearings (part no. H2D4-72, available from Whistler Bearings, in Colorado Springs), and Dick is looking for any **donations** he can get! **THANK-YOU John !!!** Here's Dick's report on the last get-together at the shop (2nd Wednesday, 6pm, July 13):

Last night at the lap shop we had a great time and cut many slabs and polished lots of specimens! FUN FUN !! It also became quite evident that we need to purchase some supplies and accessories that have been envisioned but not acquired yet. So I or Donovan will purchase with the budgeted funds for monthly expenditures the needed things.

- ◆ Shop towels (paper)
- ◆ Aprons to keep us dry
- ◆ A crescent wrench to tighten the saw and other things
- ◆ A water dispersant system for the lap machine
- ◆ 1 gal of cutting oil
- ◆ Probably some lumber and screws to make a shelving unit to store our things (manufactured by Donovan)
- ◆ Probably a 5 gal jug to supply water to the lap machine

These expenditures will be presented to Wayne for reimbursement. The contributions made last night amounted to \$18 and will be used to offset the above expenses

Of course any **donations** of the above or other things (**equipment - etc.**) will be appreciated !

◆◆◆◆ **Thank-You Glenn & Mountain Aspen Granite Countertops (719) 641-0214** for letting The LGGMC use their Lap-Workspace in Woodland Park, **Free** of charge !!!



Our next Lap-Workshop meeting is planned (2nd Wednesday of the month, 6pm) on August 10th.

This winter, even more LapShop meetings will be planned !

◆◆ Here are this month's "Bench Tips" from Brad Smith:

SOLDERING PRONGS

I often use prongs to hold an irregular cab or other object on rings and pendants. But they're a little tricky to solder. You have to find some way to hold them all upright while soldering, and what looks like a strong joint sometimes turns out to be a fake. There's nothing worse than having a prong break off when you're setting the stone *#~*!

I solved both problems with one little trick. Locate and center punch the location for each prong. Then drill holes just a little smaller than your prong wire. Sand a small taper on the ends of your prong wires and insert them in the holes. The wires support themselves, soldering is easy, and the joint is stronger because of the increased soldering area.

TWISTING WIRE

Twisting wires together can be done with an old hand drill but goes much faster with a power tool. My preference is to use a screw gun, although a Dremel or Foredom should do well. Just make a little hook out of coat-hanger wire (or use a screw-in cup hook) and chuck it up in your screw gun. Fasten the ends of the wires in a vise and slip the other ends on your hook. Keep a little tension on the wires as you twist.

Note that a power drill is too fast a tool for this unless you have one with a variable speed control.

SMOOTHING EARWIRES

Any time you make your own ear wires, the hardest part for me is to sand and polish the end that's inserted into the ear. Any sharp edge there is no fun. I've tried using sanding sticks, cup burs, and silicone polishing wheels. I've tried buffing on a Zam wheel, and I've tried spinning the wire in the Foredom to polish the tip. While all of these techniques do the job, none are very easy or fast.

Then it occurred to me - I could melt the wire smooth. One quick touch in the flame of the propane/oxygen Little Torch does the trick - not enough to form a bead on the wire but just enough to round off the tip.

More BenchTips by Brad Smith are at: groups.yahoo.com/group/BenchTips/ or facebook.com/BenchTips.

Pebble Pups Corner

The youth group of the Lake George Gem and Mineral Club (LGGMC) and the Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society (CSMS), worked with ancient Egyptian rocks and minerals that were fashioned into jewelry and ritual objects over 3,000 years ago. These objects, made of lapis lazuli, garnet, chalcedony, and copper, were removed from Egyptian tombs at least 100 years ago and have been sold on the antiquities market. Seven students from the CSMS and five students from the LGGMC weighed, measured, made photomicrographs, and investigated

the artifacts in order to write their results in the form of a research paper that was published by *Deposits* magazine this spring. The students were all in middle school and under 15 years of age. After the article was published in *Deposits*, a party was held for each student group where they were honored by their parents, teachers, and the local newspaper. The children were all very excited and are looking for more assignments.

In the meantime, their article was sent to be judged in a contest hosted by the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies, which covers 13 states in the U.S. On June 25, 2011 the entire student group won first place in the competition, and each student received a blue ribbon and an engraved, first-place plaque. Their article also won third place in the national contest hosted by the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. The opportunity for the students to conduct the research and the publication of their paper and subsequent awards has been a truly life-changing event for them. –Steven Veatch



On Saturday, July 23, all attendees enjoyed digging with our Young Pebble Pups while visiting the historic **New Hope Amethyst Mine**, near Canon City!

Thank-You *James Meacham* for the Invite!

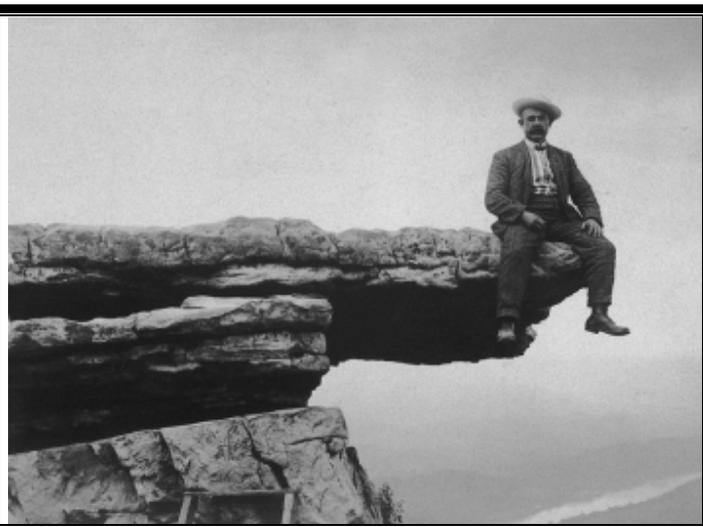
One youngster, age 6, whom journeyed from Nederland Colo., informed us all of how he plans to become a Scientist! He has grown his own crystals & lets his friends view them with his microscope! Trip leader Dan Alfrey complimented the young lad on his skills and, after working alongside of him, actually thought he would make a great 'Future Mine Superintendent'!!!



Pebble Pups classes will start up again in September. Please contact Steven Veatch for more information on the program at steven.veatch@gmail.com

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

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A Town Named GRANITE— not to be taken for GRANTED! By Beth Simmons

If you are going to Buena Vista to the Con-tin-tail Rock Swp, you might want to take a short tour of the village named for the most common intrusive igneous rock on Earth —GRANITE. The upper Arkansas River valley, including the area around GRANITE, is hemmed in between high, sheer rock outcroppings of buff/pink-colored [Precambrian GRANITE](#).

Head north on U.S. 24 out of Buena Vista toward Leadville. You will be following the old Leadville Stage Road. Just past the Clear Creek turnoff (to the west) you might see a green highway sign indicating the old stage road, with a parking area just beyond the sign. The old road lies across the river on the hillside. As you drive on to GRANITE, watch for the level road track across the river.

At one time, GRANITE'S population was largest of any town in Colorado Territory! In 1860, almost 2,000 people lived here, including HAW Tabor—in tents, under the shelter of a ledge or tree, or in hastily built log cabins with dirt floors and sod roofs.

Gold was discovered on Cache Creek at GRANITE in 1860. A flood of prospectors came to the region (and still do). Silver was discovered in Leadville in 1878 and GRANITE became a thriving stagecoach stop, home for freight wagons, and a focal point for hopeful prospectors. The D. R. G. R. R. arrived in GRANITE in July of 1880, on the east side of the river. The Colorado Midland made its way from Colorado Springs in 1887 on the west side of the river where U.S. 24 is now, but lower on the canyon wall, nearer the river.

By 1868, GRANITE was the county seat of Lake County. The county courthouse was brought down from Dayton City by wagon and rebuilt at GRANITE only to burn at a later date. 1874 and 1875 brought the "Lake County Wars", a war over water rights, to GRANITE. It reached its climax in GRANITE when members of the "Committee of Safety" killed Probate Judge Elias Dyer (son of Father Dyer, the Snowshoe Minister) in his own courtroom on July 3, 1875. The [vigilante](#) committee had been trying to rid the county of "lawbreaker" using illegal arrests, coerced confessions and forced exile as tools in its campaign. No one was ever convicted of Judge Dyer's murder. Murders were common, but convictions were not. More than one hundred homicides occurred during this period without a single conviction; it was almost impossible to get witnesses to swear to the killings.

In 1878, there was another "war" with Buena Vista over the location of the county seat. In the election, GRANITE lost to Buena Vista but wouldn't give up the record books. So a group of men lead by Ernest Wilbur "borrowed" a locomotive and flat car and went up to Granite late on the night of November 12, 1880. The men built a siding to the GRANITE Courthouse and kicked in the door. Sheriff John Mear and his wife investigated the noise and were forced at gunpoint to watch the removal of all the county records by the Buena Vista men. Furniture was unbolted from the floor, including the railing. Even the heat stove, with embers remaining in it from the day's use, was loaded onto the flatcar

By 1880, the Kirsch Brothers had a false-fronted butcher and grocery stores next door to the hay and grain store. There were boarding houses, hotels, restaurants, an assay office, saloons, a billiard hall, a smelter, two stamp mills, a livery, stagecoach depot and later a railroad deport, post office, blacksmith shop, and bakery. The white school with red trim stands on the ledge east of town. The main part of GRANITE is east of the Arkansas River and U.S. 24. Several old buildings that survived two early day fires still stand, along with old stores and restaurants along U.S. 24. On the south end of the main street in GRANITE you can see the stagecoach road as it came off the hill into town. The GRANITE Cemetery is on the hill west of the store downtown.



mindat.org: Jolyon Ralph's Brainchild
by Bob Carnein

Introduction. The Mineralogical Society of America awarded its 2011 Distinguished Public Service Medal to Jolyon Ralph—a guy with an odd name whose accomplishments in mineralogy would be remarkable even if he were a whole committee of professionals. If you haven't heard of him or used his brainchild, mindat.org, you may be sorry you read this. Although I have been a casual user of mindat for years, I only recently became a registered user and realized what a fantastic (and time consuming) resource it is, not only for the casual mineral collector, but also for the serious amateur or professional mineralogist. This article should serve as an introduction.

Who is Jolyon Ralph?? Jolyon Ralph was born in the U.K. "...a few days before the first successful demonstration of the internet...", in October, 1969 (www.mways.co.uk). After studying geology at Imperial College, London, he took a job as a programmer at British Petroleum. From 1990-97, he worked at a software development company operated by his parents. Since then, he has worked as a networking consultant and, from 1999-2007, operated his own programming and internet development business. Most recently, he runs mindat.org full time.



crystalclassics.co.uk

As a mineral collector and computer geek, Mr. Ralph early recognized the need for a program that could be used for adding and retrieving data on minerals and mineral localities. His first attempts, in 1993, were text driven and not very user friendly, but improvements followed quickly:

- ◆ 1995: choice of the mindat logo (a Siberian elbaite crystal); improvement of the computer program.
- ◆ 1996: renaming of the site (Mineral Explorer '97), with improved design and toolbars; first distribution of the Mineral Explorer software through Bob's Rockshop and Ralph's own website. Big problems when updates started flooding in from enthusiastic users.

- ◆ 2000: name changed back to mindat.org, with the first "official" version launched as a free service in October, 2000. New version allowed users to register and add or modify content, much like Wikipedia (with approval).
- ◆ 2005: server and backup for the site failed; replaced with a dedicated server with dual hard disks and processors. First show report published.
- ◆ 2006: First "Photo of the day"; first free PDF downloads of mineral books made available. First presence at the Denver, Tucson, and Tokyo mineral shows. Several consultants added to the "organization".
- ◆ 2007: publication of the first mineralogy article specifically written for mindat.
- ◆ 2008: launch of mindat.org version for iPhone/iPod Touch.
- ◆ 2009: first mindat.org field trip offered at Tucson show.
- ◆ 2010: free sticker book for kids at Tucson show.
- ◆ July, 2011: first mindat international conference held in Poland; included workshops, talks, and 3 days of field trips.

What is mindat.org? As of July 25, 2011, mindat.org listed 39,904 mineral names (including synonyms, varietal names, etc.), 222,194 localities (!!!), and hosted 383,646 member submitted photos (including several by yours truly). Twice a year, it publishes "Minerals", a free, downloadable high quality mineral newspaper with articles by members (distributed at the website and, as hard copy, at shows and conferences). It sponsors conferences, workshops,



(www.mindat.org)

and field trips, as well as mineral auctions. It publishes articles on minerals and localities, a mineral quiz, book and magazine reviews, hundreds of thousands of mineral photos, a member directory (with links), member blogs, chat rooms, and message boards. Links to clubs, university websites, collectors' home pages, and other databases are provided. There are show links and links to wholesale and retail mineral, fossil, and gemstone dealers, as well as sellers of lapidary supplies. Other links connect to businesses offering mineral cleaning/preparation services, Earth-science courses, ID services, mineral photography, and collection appraisal. There is even a link to a list of jobs in mining and geology!!

Finally, mindat.org hosts free cataloging software, allowing you to catalog your collection and store the information at the site. The catalog is private and can't be accessed without your permission. **All of this is available free of charge, with minimal advertisements** (mostly for mineral dealers) (unlike many high-fallutin' "professional" organizations that charge for access to information the taxpayers paid for in the first place!).

Search Options. The heart of the mindat.org website is the fantastic database, which is fully searchable. You can search minerals by:

- ◆ Alphabetical lists
- ◆ Physical properties
- ◆ Chemistry
- ◆ Association with other minerals
- ◆ Locality

The locality information is plotted on world maps, satellite images, hybrid maps (satellite image plus cultural features), shaded relief maps, and U.S. topographic maps, all of which come with zoom and pan options!

[Home Page](#)[Log In](#)[Message Board](#)[The Mindat Directory](#)[Register](#)[Search Pages](#)[Mineral Chat room](#)[Mindat Auctions](#)

Mineral Search

Here are links to different search pages that allow you to search for minerals or find minerals with particular properties.

- [Search for minerals by physical properties](#)
- [Search for minerals by chemistry \(table of elements\)](#)
- [Search for minerals in a region](#)
- [Search for minerals in a country/top level administrative region](#)
- [Search for photos](#)
- [View minerals known from single specimen.](#)
- [View Strunz groupings, subgroupings and minerals.](#)
- [View Dana groupings, subgroupings and minerals.](#)
- [View Hey groupings, subgroupings and minerals \(Chemical\).](#)
- [View crystal systems and classes.](#)

Locality Search

Here are links to different search pages that allow you to search for or list locality pages.

- [Search for localities by minerals found there](#)
- [Search for localities - list alphabetically](#)
- [List top 50 most prolific type localities](#)
- [List Countries/Top Level Administrative Regions](#)

Mineral and/or Locality

Search Google

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Current server date and time: 26th Jul 2011 20:41:08

Mineral and Locality Search

Mineral:

and/or Locality:



Mineral Pages. Once you choose which of several synonyms you want to search, you enter the "meat" of mindat, which is the individual mineral pages. These include the following information:

- ◆ Links to all photos available (each of which includes descriptive and locality information and can be accessed as a high-resolution photo)
- ◆ Mineral-name origin
- ◆ Type locality
- ◆ Description of typical geologic setting
- ◆ Physical properties (luster, cleavage, hardness, etc.)
- ◆ Crystallography (complete with rotating, 3-D crystal diagrams that are mouse controlled!)
- ◆ X-ray diffraction powder pattern
- ◆ Optical data
- ◆ Chemical formula (with common impurities)
- ◆ Relations to other species
- ◆ Synonyms, including names used in other languages (including Chinese!)
- ◆ Health warnings
- ◆ References
- ◆ Links to other sites, books, dealers
- ◆ Links to specimens currently available for sale on minfind.com

Individual mineral pages can be sponsored for a relatively small contribution (you may be able to sponsor your favorite mineral).

Summary. Although I still enjoy handling and perusing Dana's *Textbook* or *System of Mineralogy*, or the recently completed *Handbook of Mineralogy*, mindat's information is comprehensive and up-to-date. And what print source can offer hundreds of thousands of color photos (many of them of professional quality) and rotating 3-D crystal diagrams *for free*? Although Jolyon Ralph has contacts and helpers all over the world, this site is a superb example of what one determined person can do, starting out with minimal resources. If you haven't done so already, I urge you to visit the site and see for yourself.

Lake George Gem and Mineral Club
P.O. Box 171
Lake George, CO 80827

The Lake George Gem and Mineral Club is a group of people interested in rocks and minerals, fossils, geography and history of the Pikes Peak/South Park area, Indian artifacts and the great outdoors. The club's informational programs and field trips provide an opportunity to learn about earth sciences, rocks and minerals, lapidary work and jewelry making, and to share information and experiences with other members. Guests are welcome to attend, to see what we are about!

The club is geared primarily to amateur collectors and artisans, with programs of interest both to beginners and serious amateurs. The club meets the second Saturday of each month at the Lake George Community Center, located on the north side of US Highway 24 on the east edge of town, sharing a building with the county highway shops. **In the winter we meet at 10:00 AM. From April through September, we meet at 9:00 AM, to allow more time for our field trips.**

Our organization is incorporated under Colorado law as a nonprofit educational organization, and is a member of the Colorado, Rocky Mountain and American Federations of Mineralogical Societies. We also sponsor an annual Gem and Mineral show at Lake George, where collectors and others may purchase or sell rocks, minerals, fossils, gems or jewelry. Annual membership dues (Jan. 1 through Dec. 31) are \$15.00 for an individual (18 and over), and \$25.00 for a family (Parents plus dependents under age 18).

Our Officers for 2011 are:

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Lake George Gem and Mineral Club

August, 2011