

Lake George Gem & Mineral Club

Club News

August, 2020



CANCELLATIONS!

The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in statewide emergency regulations and public health advisories against group gatherings. Cancellations include all **LGGM Club meetings**, and **programs**, as well as **classes** such as Rockhounding 101, Mineral Identification, and Basic Wire Wrapping. We will let you know when these events can be rescheduled.

The 2020 **Lake George Gem & Mineral Show** has now been cancelled as well.

FIELD TRIPS are ON again!

Event Name	Details	Event Date	Event Leader(s)
Book Cliffs Barite (with Mile Hi RAMS)	Clear Barite	October 3rd, 2020 09:00 am	Dave Alexander
Douglas Pass Green River Formation Fossils (with MileHi RAMS)	Fossils	October 4th, 2020 09:00 am	Dave Alexander
Book Cliff Barite (with Mile Hi RAMS)	Clear Barite	October 4th, 2020 09:00 am	Chris Rayburn (Mile Hi RAMS)

Field Trip Leaders: We are looking for field trip ideas for August and September; once we get ideas and we can confirm a date, we will need volunteers for leading the trips.

Volunteering to lead a trip is simpler than you may think. If it's your first time to lead a trip we'll ensure you are comfortable enough doing it alone or we will pair an experienced leader with you. Dave or any past leader can answer all your questions and provide you with tips. The key responsibilities are:

- 1) You will need to be at the meeting point at the documented time, pass a sign-up sheet around to get everyone to sign in and collect any waiver that the trip may require
- 2) You will lead the caravan of participants to the collecting site to meet the claim owner (as necessary) or start the collecting adventure.
- 3) You will need to share information about the trip (already documented on our event page) so everyone is aware of what to collect and any additional rules.

Leading a trip is a lot of fun; and allows us to have more trips each season!

The field trip coordinator (Dave Alexander) will do the work getting the event on our events/field trip website (although you are welcome to participate) and will work with the appropriate people to secure the ability to visit the collecting site, as necessary (again, you are welcome to do this too).

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COMING EVENTS OUTSIDE THE LGGM CLUB:

Many events that are held in college facilities or local community facilities are still cancelled until further notice. However, other organizations have resumed in person meetings while others have begun having meetings or special events online.

Aug. 29, Dinosaur Ridge Boy Scout Day - Update

Due to the coronavirus, the 2020 Boy Scout Day at Dinosaur Ridge has been rescheduled for Saturday, August 29th. The event will be from 9 am - 3 pm at the Visitors Center, which is located at 16831 W. Alameda Pkwy in Morrison, just east of the Hogback.

Many of the programs listed below are through the Colorado Scientific Society. Whether these meetings will be virtual or in-person is dependent on our nation's progress containing the COVID-19 epidemic. See <https://coloscisoc.org/> for details and updates.

Symposium on Water and Energy in Colorado This will be four virtual meetings, each an hour and a half long, over different days in August. Once we have gotten final commitments from the participants for the dates and times, we will publish the schedule and let people register online.

Sep. 10, CSS Past Presidents' Dinner: Rise of the Mammals: Exceptional Continental Record of Biotic Recovery after the Cretaceous–Paleogene Mass Extinction

Tyler Lyson and Ian Miller, Denver Museum of Nature and Science

The CSS Past Presidents' Dinner is rescheduled for September 10, 2020 at the Mount Vernon Canyon Club.

Oct. 8, Colorado Scientific Society, Annual S.F. Emmons Lecture

21st Century Field Geology on the New Frontier

Dr. Michael E. Zolensky, Planetary Scientist, Astromaterials Research & Exploration Science, NASA Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX

"This talk will focus on the current missions to retrieve samples from two primitive asteroids and the largest moon of Mars." Location to be determined.

Nov. 19, Colo. Sci. Soc. November Meeting

The Rock that cried Silver Tears – The Early Jurassic Springdale Sandstone and its unusual precious metal mineralization at Silver Reef, UT, revisited

Uwe Kackstaetter, Metro State University. Location to be determined.

The Denver Mining Club has resumed its regular Monday noontime meetings at the Golden Corral Buffet, Sheridan (S. Santa Fe Dr.). See their website for the upcoming monthly schedule once it is posted, <https://www.denverminingclub.org/>.

Cancelled Gem and Mineral Shows:

Thurs.-Sun., Aug. 6-9, Buena Vista Contin-Tail outdoor gem and mineral show, Buena Vista Rodeo Grounds.

Thurs-Sun Aug. 13-16 Woodland Park Rock, Gem and Jewelry Show, Aug. 13-16.

Fri.-Sun., Aug. 14-16, Lake George Gem and Mineral Show

Wed-Sat., Sept 16-19 Denver Fine Mineral Show, Marriott Denver West

Fri.-Sun., Sept. 18-20, 53rd Annual Denver Gem and Mineral Show, at the Denver Mart Expo Hall

The following Gem and Mineral shows may still occur on schedule (subject to change at any time -- check websites for further info):

Fri – Sat, Sept 11-19 Jewelry, Gems and Minerals Expo, Clarion Inn Denver Central, 200 W. 48th Avenue, Denver www.jgmexpo.com/denver/

Fri – Tues., Sept 11-15 Colorado Mineral and Fossil Show, Crowne Plaza Denver Airport Convention Center, 15500 E 40th Ave, Denver <https://www.rmqmpromotions.com/>

OTHER EVENTS OUTSIDE THE LGGM CLUB: (Nearby gem, mineral, fossil and geology events that you may enjoy.)

- **Cañon City Geology Club**, cancelled until further notice. <https://www.canoncitygeologyclub.com/>
- **Columbine Gem & Mineral Society**, meetings TBD. <https://rockaholics.org/about/>
- **Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society** meetings cancelled until further notice
- **Pueblo Rockhounds**, meetings cancelled until further notice.

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Oct 8., Van Tuyl Lecture (Virtual), Colorado School of Mines, - Thursdays, 4-5 p.m. 241. Contact <https://geology.mines.edu/events-calendar/lectures/> for more information.

Golden Beer Talks, 2nd Tuesday, 6-8 p.m.), **At Home Editions** of Golden Beer Talks! These At Home Editions will include short videos providing an informational talk along with some details about local beers. “Golden’s grassroots version of TED talks, Expand your mind with a beer in your hand”. See <http://goldenbeertalks.org/> for more information.

Cancelled until further notice: check the following links for information on lecture series when they resume:

Colorado Café Scientifique in Denver, monthly lectures on science topics see <https://coloradocafesci.org/>

CU Geological Science Colloquium (Cancelled until further notice - Wednesdays, 4 p.m.) see <http://www.colorado.edu/geologicalsciences/colloquium>

CSU Dept. of Geoscience Seminars (Cancelled until further notice - Fridays, 4 p.m.), see <https://warnercnr.colostate.edu/geosciences/geosciences-seminar-series/>

Van Tuyl Lecture Series, Colorado School of Mines, (Cancelled until further notice - Thursdays, 4 p.m.): <https://geology.mines.edu/events-calendar/lectures/>

Denver Mining Club (Mondays, 11:30), see <http://www.denverminingclub.org/> .

Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Earth Science Colloquium series, (Cancelled until further notice - 3:00-4:00 p.m.), VIP Room unless noted, meeting dates and day of the week vary. Museum admission is not required; see <http://www.dmns.org/science/research/earth-sciences/>

Denver Region Exploration Geologists Society (DREGS); (Cancelled until further notice - usually 1st Monday, 7 p.m., Room 241 Bethoud Hall, CSM campus, Golden) <http://www.dregs.org/index.html>

Florissant Scientific Society (FSS); (Cancelled until further notice - meets monthly in various Front Range locations for a lecture or field trip; meeting locations vary, normally on Sundays at noon; all interested persons are welcome to attend the meetings and trips); see <http://www.fss-co.org/> for details and schedules.

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Friends of Mineralogy, Colorado Chapter, (Cancelled until further notice -usually meets on the 2nd Thursday of odd-numbered months, 7:30 p.m., Berthoud Hall Room 108, CSM campus, Golden; see <https://friendsofmineralogycolorado.org/>.

Golden Beer Talks, 2nd Tuesday, 6-8 p.m.), at the Buffalo Rose, 1119 Washington Ave., Golden. Doors open at 6; Talk begins at 6:35; Intermission – 7-7:15; Q&A/clean up 7:15-8. “Golden’s grassroots version of TED talks, Expand your mind with a beer in your hand”. See <http://goldenbeertalks.org/> for more information.

Nerd Night Denver is a theater-style evening featuring usually 3 short (20-minute) TED-style talks on science or related topics; held more-or-less monthly at the Oriental Theater, 4335 W. 44th Ave., Denver; drinks are available; for ages 18+. Admission is \$6 online in advance, \$10 at the door. See <https://www.nerdnitedenver.com/>.

Rocky Mountain Map Society RMMS; Denver Public Library, Gates Room, 3rd Tuesday, 5:30 p.m.), <http://rmmmaps.org/> All meetings cancelled until further notice.

Western Interior Paleontological Society (WIPS); WIPS has virtual meetings (rather than their usual meetings in person on the 1st Monday of the month, 7 p.m., in Petroleum Hall, Green Center, 924 16th St., Colorado School of Mines campus, Golden) See <http://westernpaleo.org/> for more info.

LGGM Club News:

Membership Applications for 2020 closed as of March 31, 2020. Although non-members are welcome to attend the educational programs at the monthly meetings, you must be a member to participate in any field trips with the club.

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LGGM Club field trips offer a great opportunity for an outing with social distancing. Please plan on wearing a face mask whenever remaining at least 6 feet apart is not feasible.

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Member Reports on Private Rockhounding Activities. Even though the club has resumed rockhounding field trips, any information you may have about other rockhounding you may have done on public lands that allow rock collecting, or on private lands or mines which allow fee digs or rockhounding with permission. Please tell us where you went, what you found, and provide contact information for obtaining permission (if required). Your information and photos may be included in future newsletters.

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Online Wire Wrapping Tutorial. Our LGGM Club class on **Basic Wire Wrapping** has been cancelled, but if you are interested in wire wrapping some of your stones while you are at home during the coronavirus pandemic, you might want to visit <https://www.perfectlytwistedjewelry.com/classes.html> and to check out the online video wire wrapping classes that Susan Gardner offers by internet. LGGM Club members can contact Jerrolynn Kawamoto at jerrolynn@wildblue.net or by calling 719-748-8152 to receive Susan’s gem club discount code for \$10 off of the price of the \$30 class. Or go to <https://www.perfectlytwistedjewelry.com/free-tutorials.html> to watch her 101 Basic Cabochon Wire Wrapped Pendant YouTube video tutorial.

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Links to Interesting Gem & Mineral Articles Online:

Bob Carnein sent us the following links:

Most things made largely of carbon burn easily, and diamonds are made of carbon. Can they burn, too? See <https://www.gemsociety.org/article/can-diamonds-burn/>

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About 66 million years ago, there was a sudden world-wide mass extinction of three quarters of the plant and animal species on Earth. This event is known as the K/T boundary event or the Cretaceous-Tertiary or Cretaceous-Paleogene boundary event, which marked the end of the Mesozoic Era. There is still some controversy about whether an asteroid impact or Indian volcanism was responsible for the mass extinction of the dinosaurs and many other life forms on the Earth. New evidence shown here suggests that the asteroid was the culprit.

https://www.sciencenews.org/article/asteroid-impact-volcanism-earth-dinosaurs-deccan-mass-extinction?utm_source=Editors_Picks&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=editorspicks071920

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Wayne Orlowski sent us this link on an amazing opal found in Nevada.

http://www.geologypage.com/2020/06/roebbling-opal-amazing-rare-blue-and-green-opal-found-in-nevada.html?fbclid=IwAR0_21SWcSMO3Pb0DHOPd8vjVBs4GsCgp1OEhc5T_plqWbcCgyAPITJNFL4

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The latest installment of “**Bench Tips**” by Brad Smith:

(www.BradSmithJewelry.com)

STRAIGHTENING WIRE

Have you ever pulled out some silver wire only to find that it's all bent up? The easiest way I've found to straighten it out is to stretch it a bit. Simply put one end in the vise and grab the other end with a pair of serrated tip pliers. Then pull just enough to feel the wire stretch like a rubber band. This works best on smaller wire diameters, up to about 16 gauge. Be careful if you are trying to pull hard on a thick wire. Brace yourself in case the wire breaks or pulls out of the pliers.



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DO BEZELS SHRINK?

The engineer in me says there's no reason a bezel should shrink when I solder it onto a base plate, but I sometimes find that the stone won't quite fit into the bezel that was perfect just before soldering. If that ever happens to you, here's a fix that usually works when there's just a minor problem. I file or sand the stone down a little around its base. For soft cabs like turquoise, lapis, jet or Howelite, you can use a sanding stick. Harder cabs like jasper or agates will require a diamond file. In a pinch, a ruby nail file from the drugstore will work.

There are two important things to remember when doing this. First, you can only make a minor adjustment to the stone's size. All filing or sanding has to be hidden by the bezel because it takes the polish off of the stone. Secondly, remember to round off all sharp edges on the bottom of the stone. A sharp edge here might sit on a little extra solder that's in the bottom joint of your bezel. Just a little bump here can put enough stress the stone to risk breakage when you burnish the bezel down over the stone.

Learn New Jewelry Tricks and Techniques in Brad's Jewelry-Making Books

[Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith](https://www.amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith)

Best to all

- Brad

Notes from the Editors

Bob Carnein
Co-Editor
ccarnein@gmail.com
719-687-2739

Jerrolynn Kawamoto
Co-Editor
jerrolynn@wildblue.net
719-748-8152



A Childhood Lost: Cripple Creek's Minor Miners

By **Steven Wade Veatch**

Even though working in Cripple Creek gold mines was tough labor, occasionally, miners took a break from their deep underground toil. Some Cripple Creek miners wanted to memorialize their work in the goldfields by posing for group photographs in front of their mines. A few of these photographs have survived and are stored in various Colorado archives. Some of them contained surprising faces among the cast of characters. As I studied some of these old and brittle photographs, I noticed the faces of young boys looking back at me. With a magnifying glass in hand, I looked deeper. In one photo, a young boy (figure 1) puffs on a spit-soaked cigar stuck in the corner of his mouth. With his dark eyes full of mischief, he poses with his adult coworkers at the Republic mine on the Mary McKinney mine property.



Figure 1. This photo depicts a young boy posing with the adult miners at the Republic mine in the Cripple Creek Mining District. Photo circa 1899, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.



Figure 2. This closeup captures a moment in time where a "pick boy" is sitting with a group of miners. Photo, circa 1902, courtesy of the Cripple Creek District Museum.

These "minor miners" were known as "pick boys". They were part of the mine's workforce. Some historians argue that only a handful of them were there, but their number remains undetermined and their stories lost to time.

Cripple Creek mines were dangerous, and there were many ways to be killed or injured underground: rock falls (also known as widow makers), cave-ins, explosions from unignited rounds of dynamite, and accidents with machinery. These drastic situations—the injury or loss of a father—led some children of the stricken miners, all boys, to work in the mines (Wright, 1974). These boys were supporting families that had had a father die or injured in a mining accident. Others were orphans and lived on their own.

The pick boys ran errands, fetched supplies, and brought dull drills and picks to blacksmiths for sharpening (Wyman, 1979). They also lugged water to thirsty miners to drink. It is likely that these boys tended the donkeys who worked with them underground. The pick boys tramped deep underground through claustrophobic drifts (a horizontal passage underground that usually follows a vein) that wound through the gold-bearing igneous rocks. They worked amid creaking timbers, dripping water, and the threat of deadly gases. There was inadequate ventilation underground, and the fumes of blasting, candle smoke, and rock dust from drilling filled the air. Grime stained the boys' clothes from the damp and muddy places they worked. The endless blackness of the mine swallowed the flickering light of their candles. The roar of blasting and the incessant racket of operating drills was constant. Despite these conditions, they likely labored with quiet deliberation and in their familiar routines to collect meager pay.

Some of the boys worked above ground in the ore-sorting houses. It was here that finely ground ore, considered richer than the coarser or oversized ore, was separated (Lindgren & Ransom, 1906). Some sorting houses used a process of hand sorting to separate the higher-grade ore, something a boy could do.

Lowell Thomas was 14 years old when he rode horseback for the Portland mine, gathering specimens from other gold mines to be assayed (Marist Archives and Special Collections, n.d.). The Portland mine, near the rough-and-tumble goldrush town of Victor, was one of the major producers in the Cripple Creek Mining District. Lowell Thomas grew up in Victor, where his father was the town doctor (Lee, 1958). Dr. Thomas took Lowell out for walks, where they looked for rocks and Lowell learned about geology (Lee, 1958, p. 239-240). After college, Lowell came back to the mining district and worked in some of the mines, and then edited several newspapers in the district for a short period (Lee, 1958, p. xii). Lowell Thomas went on to be a celebrated radio and television broadcaster, author, and world traveler.

Cripple Creek was not the only place where there were boy miners. In the Leadville district, boys left high school before graduation, usually to go to work in the mines and become breadwinners for their families (Crawford, 1959).

One miner's account told of his mining partner at Colorado's Climax molybdenum mine near Leadville. His partner was called "Scotty" because he was from Scotland. Scotty told him that one day when he was about 11 years old, he was at home, with the sun low on the horizon outside, flooding his family's kitchen with the ruddy light of sunrise. He was eating breakfast with his father. His mother was busy making his father's lunch for work. Scotty's father said, "Mom, fix a lunch for Junior." The mother replied, "He's going to school and will come home for lunch, and then go back to class." The father said, "Not anymore. He's goin' to the mine with me. He's had enough schooling." Scotty never went back to school (G. Lewis, personal communication, 2020). Back then, children became "adults" much earlier than today, going only as high as completing eighth grade in most cases before going to work.

Colorado coal mines in the early 20th century also used children in their workforce. According to Martha Todd, "The coal miners as a rule all had big families. The family of five was a small family. . . I've heard of families of 12 and 15 children. . . There were no child labor laws in those days and the

boys were taken into the mine [at] 11, 12, 13 years old. And the girls, just as soon as they were able to take care of baby, were kept at home. They didn't get to go to school much" (Margolis, 1985).

Child labor laws were slow in coming. In 1912, President Taft signed into law a bill creating "The Children's Bureau," the first federal agency that focused on improving the lives of children. When the Department of Labor was established the following year (1913), The Children's Bureau was transferred to it. However, child labor problems were far from solved.

Leadville's *Herald Democrat* of October 18, 1921 featured an article about child labor. "In 20 states, boys less than 16 years old could be hired to work in mines and quarries. In 17 states, child workers under 16 years of age would not even be afforded the protection of the eight-hour workday. In 17 states there would be no law to prevent the child workers from being employed at night."

The Walsh-Healey Act, enacted in 1936 as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, established safety standards, minimum wage, maximum hours, overtime pay, and child labor regulations on federal contracts. Finally, in 1949, the Fair Labor Standards Act prohibited child labor.

Since there were no social systems to take care of the families with a father killed or disabled in a mine, and no labor laws to protect them, some of the boys in Cripple Creek worked in the mines by necessity, becoming the breadwinners for their families. Some boys quit school and followed the lure of gold and the adventure of mining. They became the pick boys, the minor miners of the Cripple Creek Mining District. They endured the hard work and dangers of underground mining.

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Monthly Mineral Quiz

Last Month's Mineral: Variscite ($\text{AlPO}_4 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$).



Like its more familiar cousin turquoise, **variscite** is an aluminum phosphate that rarely occurs as well defined crystals. Instead, it forms fine grained masses, nodules, stalactites, crusts, and veinlets where phosphate bearing waters interact with aluminum rich rocks. Although localities are widespread, most mineral collectors are familiar with the large, sliced nodules from the Little Green Monster mine, Clay Canyon, near Fairfield, Utah (as seen in the photo). There, it occurs with several rare phosphates, including gordonite, montgomeryite, and overite, all named for famous

mineral collectors with important Colorado connections (Samuel Gordon, Arthur Montgomery, and Edwin Over). Although variscite is often used for cabochons and belt buckles, it is relatively soft ($H=4.5$ vs. 5 to 6 for turquoise, with which it is sometimes confused). The color varies widely, but the bright blue green color of variscite from Clay Canyon is most familiar to collectors.



August's mineral, in specimens from Arkansas (left and center) and Pennsylvania (right). Carnelian collection and photos.

This Month's Mineral. The mineral for August is related to variscite, and may even occur with it. However, it is quite a bit more common, and the most familiar (some say the best) specimens have, for years, come from Arkansas. Flat to spherical, color zoned, radial aggregates are typical (above left and center), and well formed crystals are uncommon. Its hardness is only 3.5 to 4. Besides Arkansas, fine specimens come from the writer's home state, which is not Colorado (above right). Although Eckel (1997) lists only a half dozen minor Colorado localities (including the Moon Anchor mine in Teller County), it is probably widespread but misidentified in our state. What is it?

Reference

Eckel, E.B., 1997, *Minerals of Colorado, Updated and Revised by R.R. Cobban, et al.*, 1997: Golden, Colorado, Fulcrum Publishing.



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 opportunities to learn about Earth science, 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 on 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 10:00AM. From April through September, we meet at 9:00AM, 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). New memberships and renewals are only accepted Jan 1 through March 31 each year.

Our Officers for 2020 are:

Richard Kawamoto, President
7584 Cedar Mountain Rd.
Divide, CO 80814
719-748-8152
kawahome@wildblue.net

John Rakowski, Vice President
PO Box 608
Florissant, CO 80816
719-748-3861
rakgeologist@yahoo.com

Lorrie Hutchinson, Secretary
10915 Grassland Rd.
Colorado Springs, CO 80925
719-330-2795
4lohutch@gmail.com

Cathy McLaughlin, Treasurer
11595 Owls Nest Rd.
Guffey, CO 80820
702-232-3352
cathy_mclaughlin@hotmail.com

C.R. (Bob) Carnein
Newsletter Co-Editor
507 Donzi Trail
Florissant, CO 80816
719-687-2739
ccarnein@gmail.com

Jerrolynn Kawamoto
Newsletter Co-Editor
7584 Cedar Mountain Rd.
Divide, CO 80814
719-748-8152
jerrolynn@wildblue.net