



Lake George Gem & Mineral Club

May 2024

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Postal Address:

Lake George Gem & Mineral Club
PO Box 171
Lake George, CO 80827

Website:

[LGGMC website](#)
[LGGMC on facebook](#)

Meeting Location:

Lake George Charter School GYM

[Map to Meeting Location](#)

About Us

The Lake George Gem and Mineral Club is a group of people interested in rocks and minerals, fossils, geology 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, fossils, lapidary work, 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 normally meets on the second Saturday of each month at the Lake George Charter School gym, located on the south side of US Highway 24 approaching the town of Lake George from Florissant. 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.**

Club Officers

2024 introduces a lot of new faces to our club management team. Following are the LGGMC Officers for 2024. Please reach out if you need any help.

President	Dave Bruess	david@bruess.me
Vice President	Bart Zobel	bezobel@gmail.com
Secretary	Steve Kahler	pipprophet@gmail.com
Treasurer	Cathy McLaughlin	cathy_mclaughlin@hotmail.com
Newsletter	Betty Bowles	bbowles2@gmail.com
Field Trip Coordinator	Dave Alexander	dave@davealex.com
Show Coordinator	Carol Kinate	kinate@aol.com
Pebble Pups Coordinator	Betty Merchant	betty.merchant@yahoo.com

Club Officer Biography

This month, we would like to introduce you to our Treasurer, Cathy McLaughlin.

I joined the LGGMC in 2016 and became the Treasurer at that time. I've enjoyed being the Treasurer for the past 8 years, but I'm hoping for a volunteer to replace me in the near future. I grew up in Colorado and always loved the beautiful scenery here. I've been a rock hound since I was a young girl. I find it fun and exciting to hunt for rocks in different locations. Attending club meetings, field trips and other activities has been very educational for me and I look forward to learning all I can.

To Join Our Club – (Membership is officially closed for 2024)

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 gather monthly as a club to share information including guest speaker presentations, workshops, and rock specimen show and tell discussions. We coordinate and supervise amazing field trips for club members that cover a broad spectrum of geological, archeological, rock, and mineral interests. We also sponsor the annual Gem and Mineral Show at Lake George, where collectors and others may purchase or sell rocks, minerals, fossils, gems, or jewelry.

Annual Membership

Current year membership application and/or renewal and application occurs only during **January 1-March 31**. Membership is closed for the current year after this time and last years membership list will be purged April 1. Please note that all memberships must be current in order to participate on any field trip or to use any club claim.

How to Apply

One may apply for membership in person at our monthly meetings, or visit our club website at <https://lqgmclub.org> to obtain a membership application, or go directly to https://lqgmclub.org/LGGMc_Member24v.pdf to download the application in PDF format. The application will need to be filled out and submitted to the club along with the appropriate membership dues. The mailing address to submit the application is provided in the [Error! Reference source not found.](#) section of t his newsletter. Remember to get your application in before April 1, 2024!

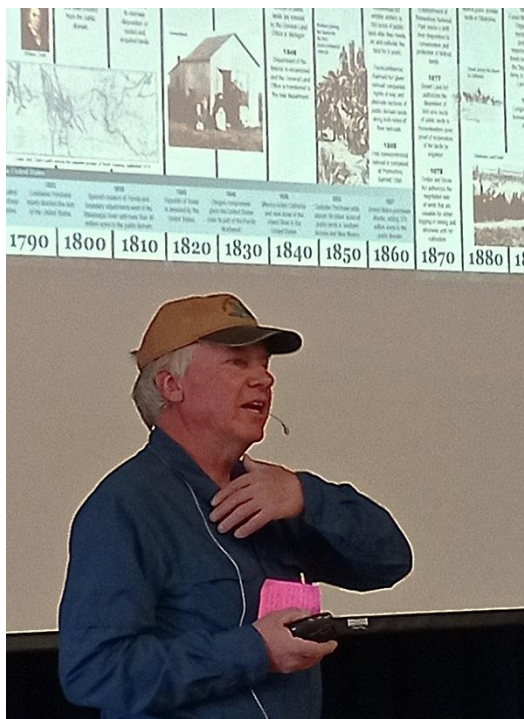
Annual Membership Fee

Annual membership dues are collected (Jan. 1 through Mar. 31). They are as follows:

LGGMc Annual Membership Dues 2024		
\$15.00	Individual	Age 18 and over
\$25.00	Family	Parents + kids under age 18

Look Forward to May Meeting (May 11, 2024 @ 9 AM)

First, April Meeting Summary



Dave Bruess presenting @ April Meeting

At our April meeting, Dave Bruess made a very informative presentation on the past, present, and potential future of mining claims. Important mining claim regulations were discussed as well as the effect of future congressional legislation on mining and rockhounding on public lands. To read more about these issues, Dave has made his presentation available on line, using one of these links:

As PDF: [Mining Claims Past Present and Future 2024 with highlights.pdf](#)

As Power Point: [Mining Claims Past Present and Future 2024 with footnotes.pptx](#)

Thank you, Dave!

May's Meeting: Pike's Peak Collecting 101 – John Rekowski

For our May meeting, John Rakowski will be presenting, Pikes Peak Collecting 101. He will present at the Lake George Charter School Gym both on Saturday May 11 and again on Saturday May 18 at 9 AM. John will have a slide presentation along with examples of rock types or minerals that are mentioned in the talk. After the presentations registered members only will go on the field trip to the club claim. All members and visitors are welcome to the presentation at the school.

John Rakowski's Bio

John has been a Lake George Gem & Mineral Club member since 2003, officer in various positions since 2006. He has been a mineral and fossil collector since early 1960's. He earned a degree in Geology and worked as an exploration geologist in the oil and gas industry from 1968 to 2010, now retired. John also is President of the Pike Peak Historical Society with its museum in Florissant. To help serve our club and members when they are out in the field, John has provided a set of notes on field collecting.



John Rakowski (who doesn't live at the charter school gym, in case you were wondering, so don't ask him that!)

Field Collecting Notes from John Rakowski

These notes have been printed in a past newsletter but should be useful to assist new members and serve as a reminder for the older members. I encourage our more experienced members to bring extra tools when possible to help supplement tools available to our newer members on field trips. Be sure your vehicle has plenty of fuel for the trip there – and back.

General:

- Be sure you will be going to unclaimed public land or if not, that you have permission.
- If you're on a Club Field Trip, pay attention to descriptions of the area where collecting is allowed and any safety information for that site.
- It's safest and more fun to be prospecting or collecting with at least one other person.
- Make sure you tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back.

- Stay away from mine openings unless you're with specially trained and equipped people.
- Use a map or GPS to keep track of where you're going and where you found specimens.
- Keep good notes of where your specimens were found and place copies of locality information in boxes with the specimens.

Safety and comfort:

- Make careful mental note of landmarks and surroundings so you can find your way back. Or mark your starting point on your GPS..
- Protect eyes with safety glasses (polycarbonate) or safety goggles.
- Comfortable back pack or 5-gallon size bucket to carry everything.
- Sturdy and safe hiking or work boots for the occasion; prefer steel toes if there are lots of loose big rocks such as Mt. Antero.
- Sunscreen, insect spray, toilet paper (TP can be good wrapping for delicate specimens).
- Plenty of water, also food if you'll be gone most of the day.
- Use gloves; quartz and other material can slice and dice your fingers quickly!
- Light raincoat BUT beware of lightning storms!
- Knee pads.
- Safety orange color vest during hunting season or in coyote hunting areas.
- Emergency blanket, whistle, small first aid set with band aids and antibiotic ointment.

Initial digging and search tools:

- Picks, small or medium. small folding shovel, or larger short handled shovel
- Brush or whisk broom, magnifier and folding saw.
- For the initial reconnaissance, just take the Safety/Comfort items, small pick, folding GI shovel, and brush. You can explore more area this way, and when you find a zone of interest you can go back for more tools and packing materials.

Pocket or specimen recovery:

- Big pick, big shovel, and big pry bar to clear the area around a pocket or zone of interest and to knock down and muck out dangerous overhangs.
- Quarter-inch hardware cloth mesh screen for some areas like topaz sites.
- Small pick and small pry bars.
- 3-pound sledge hammer and cold chisels of various sizes (avoid mushroomed chisels).

- Small shovel, trowel, hoe, brushes.
- Screwdrivers (straight or bent), bamboo skewer sticks and dental picks.
- Egg cartons, newspaper, toilet paper, boxes, bags, soda-pop flats to protect your finds.
- Consider bright paint on your small tools to make them easier to keep track of.
- When you find your “goodies”, dig around them to make it easier to recover unbroken specimens.
- Don’t dig extended undercut areas – break and muck out overhangs (cover pocket with protective cloth or

newspaper which will also alert you when you’re digging out that you’re at your pocket).

- Wrap specimens carefully-they will chip or break if not wrapped and protected. If you find a pocket, save all pieces, take them home and clean everything since many times specimens can be repaired.
- After cleaning, work on your 3-D puzzle.

Not everybody will have all the tools described above, but they’re part of a suggested list. The most important items are the Safety/Comfort items and the material for protecting your finds.

Upcoming Events

Club Meeting Mineralogy 101

(May 11, 2024)

Lake George charter School Gym, Lake George, CO

John's Rakowski's popular 101 presentation at monthly meeting will be followed with the club claims trip on the same day. An overflow trip for Saturday 5/18/2024 is currently available for signup on the club website.

Friends of Mineralogy CO Chapter 24 Symposium

(June 13-16, 2024)

Mines Museum of Earth Science, Golden, CO

The symposium theme will be “**Mineral Oddities: Twinning, Inclusions, Pseudomorphs, and More.**” Here is the tentative symposium agenda:

- **Thursday, June 13:** Field Trips (TBA)
- **Friday, June 14:** Mineral Photography Workshop and Evening Reception at the Mines Museum
- **Saturday, June 15:** Symposium Presentations
- **Sunday, June 16:** Symposium Presentations (half day)

24th Annual Victor Gem & Mineral Show

(June 14-16, 2024)

Victor, CO

The annual Victor Gem & Mineral Show presented by the Southern Teller County Focus Group (STCFG) in Victor, Colorado will be held the third weekend in June.

The event will be held in downtown historic Victor and is open and free to the public. The show will include vendors from across the state selling Colorado dug minerals. Items for sale will include polished gems, hand-crafted jewelry, rough slabs, specimens, cabochons, geodes, and more. There will also be gold

and gem panning at the Victor Lowell Thomas Museum. Show hours are from 9 to 5 Friday and Saturday and 9-4 on Sunday.

Note to Club Members: Please start thinking about donating decent specimens to be auctioned at the shows. New this year is a Silent Auction to be lead by Betty Merchant.

Johnstown Meteorite

(July 6, 2024)

Roosevelt High School, 3349 Roosevelt Pkwy, Roosevelt High School, Johnstown, CO

This year, 2024, marks the centennial year of the Johnstown Meteorite landing just outside town, and quite literally shaking things up as it made its magnificent entrance. There is a parade on June 1, in Johnstown where you will be able to see the meteorite in the parade. The meteorite is normally kept on display in the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. The “I Landed in Johnstown Centennial Celebration” is on July 6 where celebration include a memorial dedication, art show, rock and gem show, drone show, and a presentation from scientists and an astronaut.

Pikes Peak Gem & Mineral Show

(June 7-9, 2024)

Norris Penrose Event Center, 1045 Lower Gold Camp Rd, COS, CO

This the 60th annual event which is hosted by the Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society. This event will feature over 50 vendors offering gems, minerals, and fossils from Colorado and around the world, as well as jewelry, sculptures, meteorites, and more! Enjoy this family-friendly event with activities for the kids, exhibits from private collections, lapidary and faceting demonstrations, gold panning, door prizes every 30 minutes, and mineral auctions.

Florissant Heritage Day Festival

(July 27, 2024)

Florissant, CO

The town of Florissant, in Teller County, has a rich and varied history – from the native Ute people who called the area home, to the early mountain men who traversed the area seeking furs for trade, to the pioneers who left their mark by building homes

and establishing a town. Every year, the town of Florissant celebrates this legacy with the annual Heritage Day celebration.

Southern Colorado Rock & Mineral Show

(Aug 30-Sep 1, 2024) [Note rescheduled dates!!](#)

COS Convention Center, 3960 Palmer Park Rd COS, CO

Demonstrations, vendors, presentations, rock auction, live music, beer garden, kids' activities, supply sales, geology clubs, door prizes, food, gold mining tips, & much more!

Upcoming Field Trips

Field Trips available at the May 11 th Meeting (so far)	
6/1/2024	Topaz Mountain Gem Mine - pay dig
6/8/2024	Hartsel blue barite claim
6/17/2024	Time Assassin claim
Field Trips available at the June 8 th Meeting (so far)	
7/6/2024	Smoky Hawk Mine
7/13/2024	Florissant fossil quarry - pay dig
7/13/2024	Gold City Claim (day)
7/13/2024	Gold City Claim (night)

You can check out all the details for each of these trips on our event website FieldTrips.LGGMClub.org. Each event has an "availability date" shown in the trip details (see the button at the top-right), this is when that trip will be available for website registration, typically the following Wednesday after the club

meeting where early sign-up is available. Note that website registration starts at 12:00 am Mountain time on the date listed.

Feedback and field trip sign-up tips

A few reminders based on feedback from members and field trips thus far:

When signing up for an event, ensure you add this commitment to your personal calendar. TIP: There is a "Add To Calendar" button available on each trip to make this easy for you.

Review the route to the meeting place within the event in the days PRIOR to the trip. This will give you an idea of travel time and please add enough contingency time in case of unexpected road construction or traffic. *Field Trip leaders will leave on-time.* TIP: There is a Google Maps at the bottom of every field trip event page that you can use in your planning, and for navigation on the day-of the event! Try it!

As always, if you no longer can join us on the trip, please unregister yourself ASAP as most trips have eager waitlists!

Meet Our Neighbors

Here is a list of nearby gem, mineral, fossil, and geology club meetings that you may enjoy. Go to each club's website for more information.

Cañon City Geology Club

Meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6PM at United Methodist Church, Cañon City.

Pueblo Rockhounds

Meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM at Westminster Presb. Church, 10 University Circle, Pueblo

Columbine Gem & Mineral Society

Meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month, 6:30PM at meeting room, Mt. Shavano Manor, 525 W. 16th, Salida

Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society

Meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7PM Colorado Springs Christian School, 4855 Mallow Rd, Colorado Springs.



This month's mineral is one of those secondary products of weathering and alteration of a common sulfide ore mineral. It contains arsenic, which makes it an environmental issue where it's exposed to weathering. As seen in the left and center photos, this mineral commonly displays a botryoidal (grape-like) habit. Crystals like those shown in the right photo are uncommon and are usually simple hexagonal prisms. This mineral's hardness is $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4, and it has a high SG of about 7.1. Common associates include cerussite, anglesite, wulfenite, and a variety of other attractive minerals that form above the water table, in the oxidized zone. Mindat.org lists only 9 Colorado localities, but it's probably more common than that and simply has not been recognized. What do you think it is?

glass. Pyrite's hardness is 6 to $6\frac{1}{2}$, harder than either glass or steel. If the sample is crystallized, chalcopyrite, which is tetragonal, displays pseudo-tetrahedrons, which are 4-sided, while pyrite, which is isometric, generally occurs as 6-sided, striated cubes or as pyritohedrons (which are 12-sided). Both minerals are common in mixed metal-sulfide deposits, along with such minerals as galena, sphalerite, and various secondary minerals. Both may become iridescent because of alteration.

Last Month's Mineral:



Last month's mineral is the main ore of copper, and the source of a huge number of secondary copper minerals that are loved by collectors. It resembles pyrite, so it's important that you learn to distinguish between them. The easiest way to do that is to test the hardness. Chalcopyrite has $H=3\frac{1}{2}$ to 4, softer than steel or

Interesting Reads

In this section, we provide some fun rock, mineral, and geology news and information to enjoy from several of our favorite magazines.

From Rock & Gem



Echinoderms: Fossils of Marine History

Echinoderm fossils give clues to the ancient past including the conditions where they lived. There are more identified fossil species than living species.

[Read More](#)



Penn Dixie Fossil Park & Nature Preserve

At Penn Dixie Fossil Park and Nature Preserve, the remains of a 380 million-year-old undersea Devonian world of brachiopod, crinoid and trilobite fossils await.

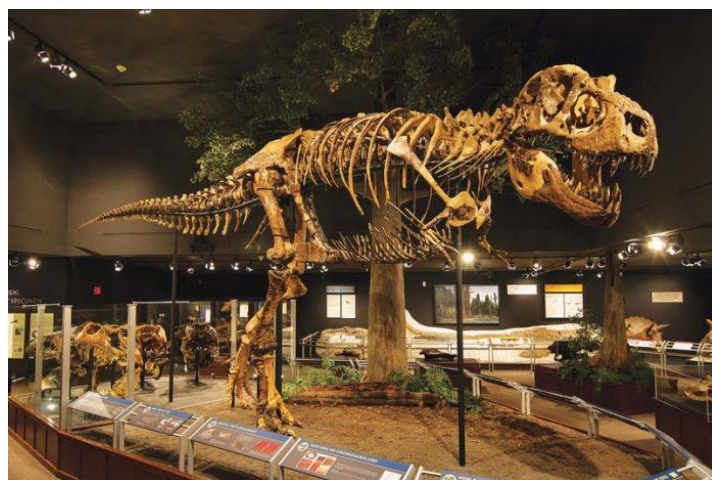
[Read More](#)



Brachiopods: Ancient Marine Life

Brachiopods are one of the most common and recognizable marine fossils. There have been about 30,000 fossil species described with 385 species in oceans today.

[Read More](#)



Exploring the Montana Dinosaur Trail

Exploring the Montana Dinosaur Trail provides a great opportunity for amateur paleontologists to explore this fascinating realm and get their hands in the dirt.

[Read More](#)

From Rock Seeker

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Black opals are by far one of the most fascinating and valuable types of opals, prized for their stunning beauty, unique characteristics and rarity. But there's one black opal that stands out above all the rest, "The Sea of Opal", which also happens to be the largest black opal ever found!

[The World's Largest Black Opal: "The Sea of Opal"](#)



Here are some more interesting facts about black opal!

Black opals are the rarest and most sought-after type of opals in the world, known for their stunning play-of-color against a dark background.

Over 95% of the world's black opals come from Australia, making it the national gemstone of the country, with [the town of Lightning Ridge](#), in New South Wales probably being the most famous.

The unique play-of-color seen in black opals is due to the diffraction of light by silica spheres within the stone. This can display all the colors of the rainbow in an iridescent, moving pattern.

The dark body color of black opals, which ranges from dark gray to jet black, is due to the presence of carbon and iron oxide in the stone. This dark background makes the colors appear even more vibrant.

WHAT'S THIS ROCK?

These are a group of silicate minerals that have been used since the Bronze Age as both gemstones and abrasives.

While the most common color is deep red, they can be found in many different colors including red, orange, yellow, green, purple, brown, blue, black, pink, and even colorless.

[Think you know what they are? You can find out here!](#)



GEOLOGY FACTS

Scientists have cracked the code behind the fascinating honeycomb patterns seen in salt deserts, like those in Death Valley, California, and Salar de Uyuni in Chile.

[Salt Flat Honeycomb Pattern Solved!: Scientists Learn What Causes These Intriguing Formations](#)



Previously, experts thought these patterns were either the result of the salt crust cracking as it dried or the crust growing and bending due to space constraints. But neither theory could explain why these patterns consistently measure one to two meters across or their distinct honeycomb shape.

The real answer, discovered by researchers from Nottingham Trent University and TU Graz in Austria, lies beneath the surface.

- [Learn More!](#)

Field Trip Clarifications & Notifications

Field trip season starts this month! We are still working on solidifying trips and already have a nice selection in April and May ready to go. There are a couple of important reminders as we approach the field trip season.

KNOW THE RULES: Please ensure you read the Field Trip Rules and Code of Ethics each season, now is a great time to do so. It is required, will take <5 minutes and is available on our event website

USE YOUR CALENDAR: Please verify that you add our field trips to your personal calendar. We've made that easy for you, on each event there is an "Add to Calendar" button or you can do it manually yourself. This is important because a common issue we hear creating no-show situations is the person forgot about the trip. Having the event in your personal calendar will highlight when you have a scheduling conflict between personal life and the field trip; allowing for you to remove yourself from the trip as soon as possible.

REVIEW THE STATUS OF THE TRIPS YOU ARE SIGNED UP

FOR: You can verify the field trips you are signed-up for (or waitlisted) by logging into the field trip event website and choosing Profile and looking at the "My Events" section.

HAVE THE APP GUIDE YOU TO THE MEETING PLACE: When heading out to the field trip meeting point, consider using the "Navigate" feature from within the field trip event description. If you do this on your phone, it will automatically start navigation on your phone and guide you to the exact location. Please plan ahead, look at this the night before the trip so you can get a rough idea of how long it will take, then add some contingency time to your journey, you never know when there will be a delay on the roadway. The feedback we've gotten over the years is this website feature greatly reduces the number of members being late to the meeting point (which leaders often only wait an extra few minutes) and members getting lost.

ENSURE EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS ARE NOT IN SPAM: Some email clients will mistakenly mark our automated notifications as spam email. Make sure anything from *LGGMClug.org* and *LGGMCFieldTrips.com* are both safe senders.

REMOVE YOURSELF FROM WAITLIST: Some folks don't like the "last minute" schedule changes that occur in the final days leading up to a trip. At any point you are no longer wanting to participate on a trip, please remove yourself from the waitlist. If last minute you are added as an attendee from the waitlist, yet you already decided not to attend, that would make you a no-show removing the opportunity for other club members to

participate. There could be disciplinary actions taken for repeat no-show offenders.

There were several questions over the last couple months on the specifics on event sign-ups. I'll run through these to clarify our process.

Typically, field trips will be available for "early sign-up" at our club meetings. We may not have "early" sign-up for some trips requiring travel (mostly out of state) as these typically don't fill up; in these cases you'll see an automated notification from our field trip website that the trip is available.

After the early sign-up, the Field Trip Coordinators are required to manually enter those attendees into our event site. This could take a few days to complete so we likely will be opening up the website registration process for the trips the following week. You will see the date trips are available for sign-up in the field trip event (it's an "action" button on the top right) and can mark your calendar.

On that availability date, the trip opens up first thing that morning, 12:00am.

If you participate in the "early sign-up" at a meeting, it is wise to check to ensure you are registered for the trip as soon as you can. Given that it could take us several days to enter those registrations, I'd recommend to check the day before the trip's availability date and use the "Contact" action button if you discover any issues.

We may trigger an automated notification that a new field trip is available for some trips if we need to get an accurate headcount estimate; often we do this before offering other clubs to join us.

A note on parking at our club claim and in the forests in general...

The local sheriff can enforce parking rules by issuing citations. At the entrance to the forest there are typically rules posted on big signs, and if you read those signs, it often says you are only allowed to park in designated parking spots marked with a posted "P" sign. If there is what looks like a great place to park, but there isn't a posted parking sign, you are running the risk of a ticket. Trust me on this, after a good day prospecting and (hopefully) finding treasures it really sucks to find a parking ticket on your vehicle, takes some of the excitement of the day away from you!

There were several members that received parking tickets at our club claim last season. For our club trips, we will be parking at the trailhead from now on, which is only a couple more minutes easy walk for you.

PROSPECTING 101: John Rakowski's May 11th Prospecting 101 presentation and field trip again was popular this year! John was kind enough to add a second presentation and trip on May 18th. Everyone is encouraged and welcome to come to the May meeting and see John's amazing presentation. Especially if you are new to the hobby, this presentation is something you won't regret and will help you immensely when out prospecting. Only people signed-up for the field trip, however, will be able to participate in that day's trip to the club claims. On May 18th the overflow trip will start with a presentation at the Lake George school cafeteria and those participants together will caravan to the club claims after the presentation.

VOLUNTEER: We need a volunteer to help with our outreach lapidary event on the last Saturday of July (July 27) at the Pikes Peak Historical Society Museum in Florissant. It's a really fun event for the club and community. You'd be in charge of going to the club's storage unit in Lake George (just a few minutes west of the event's location in Florissant) and pulling out some tables, saws, canopy and coordinating other volunteers to bring equipment. Typically, it lasts from about 9am to 1pm.

Messages in Stone – a poem by Steven Wade Veatch

Messages in Stone



By Steven Wade Veatch

Those who are gone once came to this sacred place
of remote canyon walls filled with quiet grace.
They made circles of stones to pray and to fast,
to seek a vision for guidance and join with the past.

Here, seekers waited for their spirit guide to appear
who came in many forms to give strength and end fear.
The seekers knew this place where others once prayed
and had visions of power as long as they stayed.

They left sacred images to last on cosmic red rocks:
Dancers, flute players, lizards, and birds left as pecked pocks.
An eternal art on canyon walls of symbols, visions, and more
Left behind from those who came here before.

Now the clouds grow dark and are messengers of rain,
they bring a breeze scented with sage over the terrain.
An eagle soars as a guardian spirit above the canyon below
over the messages in stone only the ancients truly know.