



# The Creative Vein

## *A Note from Our President*

*Inspiring discovery and artistry*



As we move into spring, I've been thinking a lot about why so many of us are drawn to this club. Life can feel noisy and chaotic, and yet when we sit down to shape a cab, wrap a stone, or form a simple piece of metal, something shifts. The act of taking a plain—or even downright ugly—piece of material and turning it into something beautiful is grounding in a way few things are. Creativity has a way of slowing the mind, steadying the breath, and reminding us that transformation is possible in small, everyday ways.

I want to encourage each of you to stay involved, try a new class, or simply stop by the shop during open hours. Participation isn't just about learning skills—it's about connection, community, and giving yourself a little space to de-stress and recharge.

A couple of quick reminders as we wrap up the month: **Membership renewals for 2026 are due by the end of March.** If you haven't renewed yet, please take a moment to do so at the next meeting or during open shop hours. We'd love to keep you with us for another year of creativity and discovery. We are also still seeking a volunteer to serve as **interim treasurer for the remainder of 2026.** If you have an accounting or bookkeeping background—or simply feel called to help the club in a meaningful way—please reach out. Your support would make a tremendous difference.

Thank you for being part of this community. Your curiosity, generosity, and willingness to show up for one another are what make this club such a special place.

Dr. Jennifer Davison  
President

## *April Meeting—Discover American Minerals with James Hislop*

Join us on April 2, 6:15-7:45 pm at the Merritt Island Public Library for a special program with rockhound and adventurer James Hislop. James has spent years traveling the country in search of American-sourced minerals, and he'll be sharing stories from the field along with a selection of his finds for sale that evening. See full details inside this issue.

## *Key Dates*

**April 2**—Monthly Club Meeting (6:15-7:45pm at Merritt Island Public Library)

**April 20**—Wire-Wrapping Class (6-9pm at the Shop)

**April 30**—Chain Mail Class (6-9pm at the Shop)

## *April Meeting Program— Exploring American Minerals with James Hislop*

At our **April 2 meeting (6:15–7:45 pm at the Merritt Island Public Library)**, we're excited to welcome guest speaker **James Hislop**—rockhound, collector, traveler, and passionate advocate for American-sourced minerals.

James has spent years crisscrossing the country in search of unique mineral specimens, digging at sites from coast to coast and building relationships with the miners, divers, and small operations that bring these treasures to light. His mission is simple but meaningful: to share American minerals with the people of Florida while supporting the mines, diggers, and craftspeople who make them possible. Some foreign gem and fossil markets operate with little oversight, which can lead to environmental damage or unfair labor practices, so many collectors choose American-sourced materials for their transparency and responsible origins.



During his presentation, James will share stories from the field, insights into responsible collecting, and a look at some of the remarkable materials he's uncovered on his travels.

He will also have a selection of items available for purchase that evening, including:

- **Rucks Pit material**
- **Cabochons and pendants**
- **American-sourced minerals**

If you enjoy Florida fossils, domestic minerals, or simply love hearing from someone who lives the rockhound life with enthusiasm and purpose, this is a program you won't want to miss. If you've ever been curious about prospecting, this is a meeting you won't want to miss.



### *A Few Quick Reminders*

- **2026 Membership Renewals** are due by the end of March. If you haven't renewed yet, you can do so at the next meeting or during open shop hours.
- We're still seeking an **interim Treasurer** for the remainder of the year. If you have bookkeeping experience—or simply want to support the club—please reach out.
- **Interested in taking a class?** In addition to our ongoing monthly evening series on wire-wrapping and chain mail, we offer regular classes in silversmithing, cabbing, and faceting. We're also working to add opal cutting, beading, and gem trees to the lineup soon. Email us at [info@centralbrevardrockandgem.com](mailto:info@centralbrevardrockandgem.com) and let us know which classes you'd like to try. We'll follow up with details and scheduling options.

# March Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<b>1</b> Open Shop 9:30-12:30 & 12:30-3:30	<b>2</b> Monthly Club Meeting 6:15-7:45	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> Open Shop 1-4	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> Open Shop 9:30-12:30 & 12:30-3:30	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> Open Shop 1-4	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> Open Shop 9:30-12:30 & 12:30-3:30	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> Open Shop 1-4	<b>20</b> Wire- Wrapping Class @ Shop 6-9	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Open Shop 9:30-12:30 & 12:30-3:30	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> Open Shop 1-4	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Open Shop 9:30-12:30 & 12:30-3:30	<b>30</b> Chain Mail Class @ Shop 6-9		

Our shop is located at 407 Imperial Boulevard, Unit D-1B, Cape Canaveral, FL  
Contact us via email at [info@centralbrevardrockandgem.com](mailto:info@centralbrevardrockandgem.com)



## **Drilling Metal: Give Your Bit a Place to Start**

When drilling into metal, a tiny starter indent makes all the difference. Use a center punch (or even a sharp nail) to tap a small divot where you want the hole. This keeps the drill bit from wandering and helps you get a cleaner, more accurate start. Drill at a steady speed and let the

bit do the work—pushing too hard only shortens the life of your tools.

## **Drilling Cabochons: Slow, Cool, and Gentle**

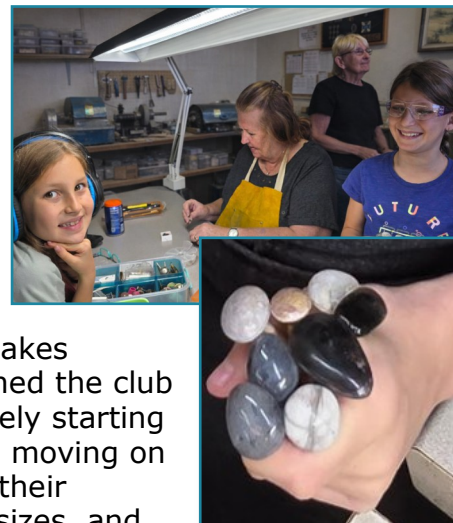
Cabochons need a completely different approach. Skip the center punch—it can crack the stone. Instead, place a piece of painter's tape over the spot and use a small diamond bit to slowly grind a pilot divot. Keep the stone wet to stay cool and reduce stress. Once the starter divot is formed, switch to your main drill size and continue with light pressure and slow speed.

## **Let the Diamond Bit Do the Work**

Whether you're drilling metal or stone, resist the urge to force the drill. A diamond bit cuts best with patience, steady speed, and minimal pressure. Let the abrasive surface do the grinding, and keep your workpiece supported and stable. You'll get cleaner holes, longer tool life, and far fewer broken bits.

## Member Creation Spotlight

**Open Shop Highlights**—It's been a wonderfully busy month in the shop, with members dropping in during open shop hours to work on projects, share ideas, and enjoy each other's company. One recent afternoon, member **Fiona** came in with her younger sister **Nora** and their mom, **Tara**, who is a familiar and always-welcome presence in the shop. (She's there with her girls for just about everything—which makes perfect sense, since she's also the driver.) Fiona originally joined the club because she wants to learn silversmithing, but she's been wisely starting with cabbing so she can learn to shape her own stones before moving on to torch work. Both she and Tara have been steadily building their cabbing skills—Tara experimenting with different shapes and sizes, and Fiona already showing a great eye for "what could be." She's even tagged two of her cabbed stones for future earrings, and we're all looking forward to seeing how those turn out. That afternoon turned into a lively session of cabbing and silversmithing with the girls, and **Kathy** and **Karen**.



At right you'll see a bouquet of freshly dopped cabochons proudly displayed by Fiona. And while Nora isn't officially a member yet, she's been paying close attention during these visits (even while doing homework). We may have another junior member joining us before long.

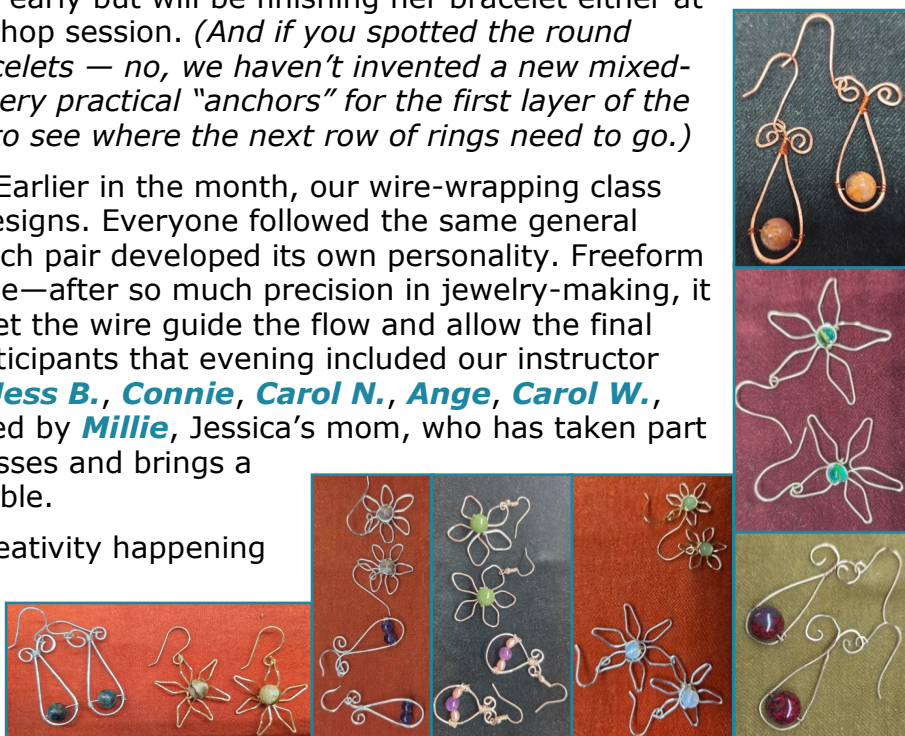


**March Chain Mail Class**—Our March chain mail class produced a beautiful lineup of bracelets, each one a little different as students explored the rhythm of the weave. From top to bottom: **Karina**, **Jennifer**, **Kim** (a visitor that night),

**Carol**, **Erleen**, and **Keira**. A few were still in progress when the photo was taken, but the patterns were already taking shape. We were also joined by **Valinda**, a brand new member who had to leave a bit early but will be finishing her bracelet either at home or during a future open shop session. (And if you spotted the round safety pins on a few of the bracelets — no, we haven't invented a new mixed-metal toggle. Those were our very practical "anchors" for the first layer of the weave, making it much easier to see where the next row of rings need to go.)

**Wire-Wrapping Workshop**—Earlier in the month, our wire-wrapping class tackled two freeform earring designs. Everyone followed the same general pattern, but as you can see, each pair developed its own personality. Freeform work is its own kind of challenge—after so much precision in jewelry-making, it can feel strange (and fun!) to let the wire guide the flow and allow the final shape to emerge naturally. Participants that evening included our instructor **Jessica**, along with members **Jess B.**, **Connie**, **Carol N.**, **Ange**, **Carol W.**, and **Erleen**. We were also joined by **Millie**, Jessica's mom, who has taken part in several of her daughter's classes and brings a wonderful enthusiasm to the table.

It's inspiring to see so much creativity happening in the shop. Keep bringing in your projects—we love celebrating what you're making.



# Rock of the Month—Aquamarine (Beryl)

March is a month of movement. The days stretch longer, the air softens, and the world begins to flow again after winter's pause. Aquamarine fits this moment perfectly. Its clear blue color, ranging from pale sky to deep sea, feels like thawing ice and open water. It is a visual reminder that change does not always arrive loudly. Sometimes it comes quietly, one degree at a time.

Aquamarine is a variety of beryl, formed deep within the Earth over immense spans of time. Despite its calm appearance, its creation is anything but gentle. Pressure, heat, and slow crystal growth shape it long before it ever reaches the surface. Ancient sailors believed aquamarine was a stone of safe passage, carried to protect voyages across unpredictable waters.

Whether or not one believes the legend, the symbolism holds. Clarity and steadiness matter most when conditions are uncertain.

For March, aquamarine invites us to think about transitions. It represents moving forward without force, choosing clarity over chaos and patience over urgency. In a season where rivers swell, storms roll through, and life restarts in subtle ways, aquamarine reminds us that resilience does not always look like hardness. Sometimes, strength looks like adaptability.

As we enter spring, this stone encourages us to navigate change with calm intention, trusting that even after long winters, the current eventually carries us somewhere new.



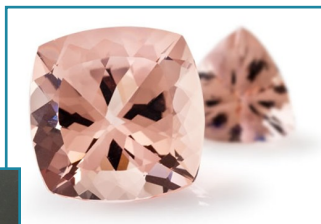
## Rock Science Spotlight... What is Beryl, Really?

Beryl is a single mineral species with a surprisingly simple base formula:  $\text{Be}_3\text{Al}_2\text{Si}_6\text{O}_{18}$  (beryllium + aluminum + silicon + oxygen). Those ingredients arrange themselves into ring-shaped silicate structures called *cyclosilicates*. On its own, pure beryl is actually colorless.

That's the science...the magic happens when trace elements sneak into the crystal:

- Iron—aquamarine (blue-green)
- Chromium or vanadium—emerald (green)
- Manganese—morganite (pink) or red beryl (very rare)

So all those different gemstones — aquamarine, emerald, morganite, heliodor, goshenite, red beryl — are simply color variations of the same mineral, transformed by tiny chemical "guest stars."



# Minutes from March 5 General Meeting

**Call to order**—Carol Warner (quorum of 17 voting members present)

## **Pledge of allegiance**

## **Welcome visitors**

## **Board/Committee reports**

- President—not present this evening
- 1st VP—Andrew
  - Brief update on programming for general meetings—Patrick this evening, James Hislop scheduled in April
- 2nd VP—Rose
  - Provided an update on number of members and reminder of renewals due by the end of March
- Treasurer—Erleen (as interim)
  - Provided brief update on account balances; details on show accounting are still being finalized
- Secretary—Carol
  - No specific update
- Workshop—Rick
  - Nothing to report
- Expo—Erleen
  - Recap of this year’s event—one of our best shows
  - A huge thank you to all of our volunteers—your active participation in set-up, operation and break-down of the show made it a big success
  - A special call-out to our junior volunteers for their energy and dedication in the kids zone
  - Next steps—will be holding a post-show meeting soon

## **Old Business**

- By-laws—Andrew
  - In our last meeting, a motion was passed to form a committee to review current bylaws for changes that will better support the way we conduct business as an organization
  - Called for volunteers to serve on this committee—Ed Otto and Patrick Williamson volunteered and will work with Andrew to outline suggested

changes that will be brought first to the board for review, then back to members for final approval.

## **New Business**

- Special election for Treasurer
  - 2026 Treasurer has resigned; Erleen is currently serving as interim (appointed per our bylaws by our president)
  - Will White will be leading the effort to identify candidates from our membership, with a special election (hopefully) to be held at the April meeting.
- Still on the hunt for new shop space
  - Shared in the last meeting that for a variety of reasons we would not be pursuing the space at the mall
  - Will continue to look for a place that will provide more square footage and meet our requirements as a working shop
- Key dates
  - March 16—Wire-wrapping class
  - March 26—Chain mail class
  - March 28—Melbourne club Rock Swap
- Call for any additional new business
  - Rose mentioned that we need to have someone in charge of scheduling classes & put out a call for volunteers

## **Break**

**Guest Speaker**—Patrick Williamson provided an informative overview about gold prospecting, with samples of tools and the rock types he has found containing gold

**Show & Tell**—Several members showed their creations from several recent classes

## **Meeting adjourned**

*If you missed Patrick’s presentation last month, you can view it here:*

[https://youtu.be/I8QmC9Tc\\_5M](https://youtu.be/I8QmC9Tc_5M)