



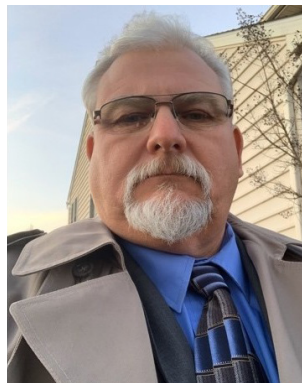
*to promote, support, protect and expand the collection of mineral specimens and to further the recognition of the scientific, economic and aesthetic value of minerals and collecting mineral specimens*

# BULLETIN OF FRIENDS OF MINERALOGY

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Bill Stephens

Hello everyone! The Board has been pretty quiet this last quarter. Everything remains 5 x 5, and I'm sure everyone is enjoying their summer so far. I have been extremely busy and have not had much opportunity to work on FM things, but we have begun to edit the operating regulations and Tama Higuchi has submitted some alterna-

tive designs for a new logo for the Board to consider and comment on as necessary. I suspect we will have the draft operating regulations revised by the fourth quarter and perhaps the new logo as well.

I must say yesterday (Friday June 27) was the first day in months I have come up for air. We completed and submitted 2 urban infill residential subdivision Concept Plans, 4 Forest Stand Delineations, a huge boundary survey of marshland and upland in Wicomico County, Maryland for the USFWS Conservation Easement to be added to Blackwater Wildlife Refuge's easements, Sewer connection plan, sundry wetland delineations, grading and stormwater plans for small developments not to mention significant yard work. Now we have some less urgent projects to work on and I'll find some time to do some collecting and get the ops regs ready for board review and consideration.

I am working on some private field trip/machine dig opportunities as well as planning a field trip event for Tucson. Stay tuned and look for more articles on various topics as the year progresses.

Also, please read my article on Kentucky Geode field collecting with the Kanawa Club back in May. It was a great trip and the club had a great time. I drove 10 hours down to Danville KY area to hang with one of my EFMLS Region 5 clubs I have never met in 6 years or been able to communicate effectively with as their Region 5 RVP. Some of you may recall I am the immediate past President of the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical and Lapidary Societies, Inc. and I still have Region 4 (MD, DC, DE, VA) in my area of direct communication responsibility. Members of EFMLS organizations are also members of our FM Chapters. As we look forward to the next National Symposium, which will be Hybrid, part of my marketing strategy for FM National and our chapters

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### WEBSITE:

[friendsofmineralogy.org](http://friendsofmineralogy.org)



### CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

[friendsofmineralogy.org/calendar-of-events](http://friendsofmineralogy.org/calendar-of-events)



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Public group: [www.facebook.com/friendsofmineralogy](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofmineralogy)



### INSTAGRAM:

[@friendsofmineralogy](https://www.instagram.com/friendsofmineralogy)



(President's Message, continued from page 1)

is to inform and engage with these larger organizations to generate interest more broadly in our symposium and activities.

I also would like to mention that I am planning an open house for mineral sales at my home sometime in mid-July or August and will make an announcement when that date becomes fixed. If you are interested in coming reach out by email or message me on Facebook.

Don't forget the show and symposium theme is red white and blue minerals in celebration of the US 250th anniversary. Also, if you chapter would like a presentation via zoom, I have a dozen topics already in the bag and I am happy to provide one you select. 3 have been given at past National and all have been given at PA Chapter symposia.

All for now. Stay Tuned!

CALL For ARTICLES

If you are interested in contributing an article to the National or PA Chapter newsletter, contact our National Newsletter Editor Sean Stimac (articles only) or David Glick for our PA Chapter Newsletter.

Be sure to look me up if you are in town. Till then, stay safe, stay tuned and happy hunting!

Sincerely,

Bill Stephens, PG, President

FM-PA & FM National

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Dear Reader,

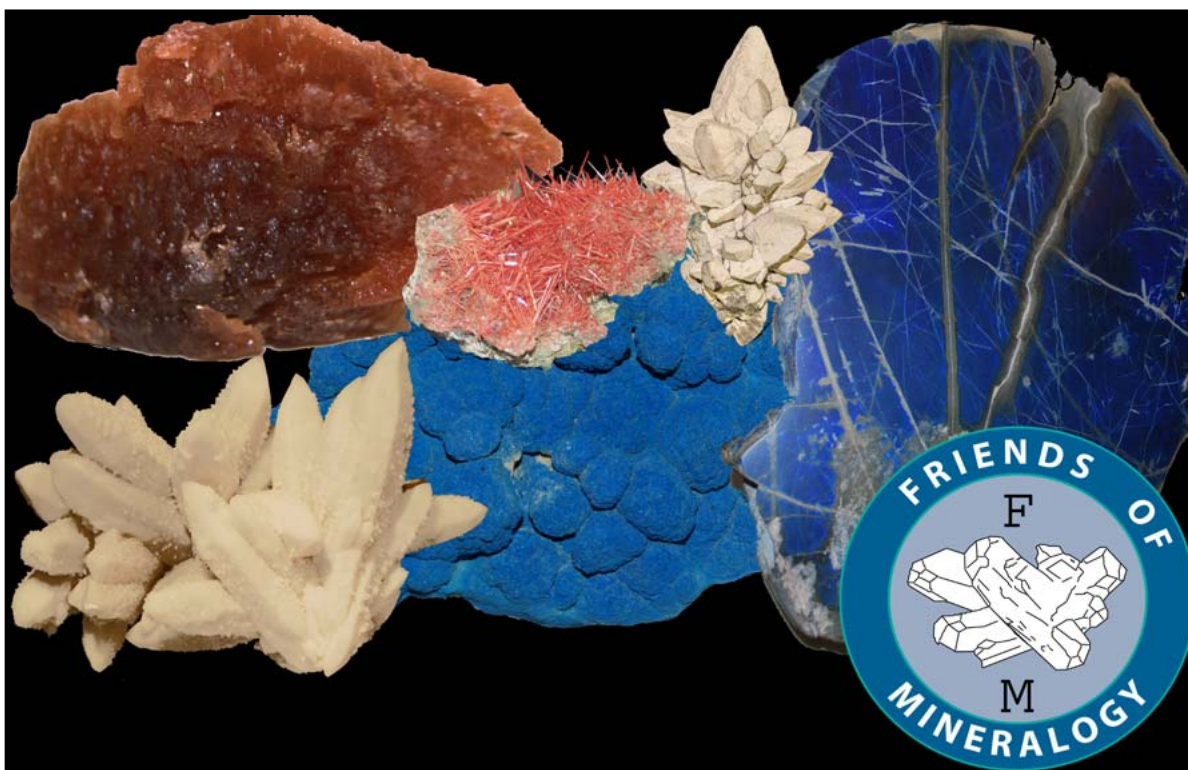
This issue is a bit lighter on content than usual. As a volunteer-run organization, there are times when the demands of everyday life limit our ability to contribute. That said, we're pleased to feature a fantastic field trip report on Kentucky geodes, written by our president, Bill Stephens as well as update on Ruck's Pit.

If you're planning to submit a paper for TGMS, please remember that the deadline is July 31st (see the flyer on the next page for details).

As always, we welcome article submissions—field trip reports, show coverage, mineralogical news, and more. If it supports our mission, we're interested. Chances are, what interests you will resonate with others in our community. To submit content, please email me (contact information is on page 2).

Best Regards,

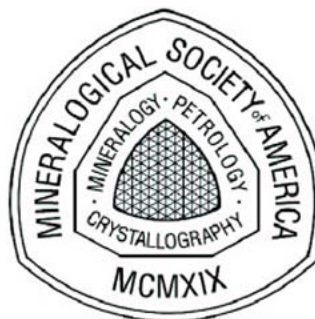
Sean Stimac



Friends of Mineralogy in conjunction with the Mineralogical Society of America and the Tucson Gem & Mineral Society® is pleased to announce the **44nd Annual Tucson Mineral Symposium.**

*Red, White, and Blue*  
*- Celebrate the Spirit of Minerals*

*Saturday, February 14, 2026*





# *The 44th FM-TGMS-MSA Tucson Mineral Symposium*

## *Theme “Red, White and Blue, Celebrate the Spirit of Minerals”*

The 44th FM-TGMS-MSA Tucson Mineral Symposium

“Red White and Blue, Celebrate the Spirit of Minerals.”

Saturday, February 14, 2026

Tucson Convention Center, Tucson, AZ

Call for papers

The forty-fourth Mineral Symposium, held in conjunction with the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show®, will take place on Saturday, February 14, 2026. This symposium is co-sponsored by the Tucson Gem and Mineral Society®, the Friends of Mineralogy, and the Mineralogical Society of America. As a tie in with the show, the symposium theme is a modified form of the show theme: “Red White and Blue, Celebrate the Spirit of Minerals.”

Presentations are sought on red, white or blue minerals – worldwide localities, geology, mineralogy, crystallography, cause of color, or geochemistry. Some examples of desired topics, but not restricted to these, are talks about rhodochrosite, rhodonite, rubies, red beryl, azurite, aquamarine, linarite, lazurite, elbaite, barite, gypsum, calcite, and zeolites.

An audience of amateur and professional mineralogists and geologists is expected.

Interested speakers, should first submit their desired talk title for a presentation length of 30 minutes (or 25 minutes plus 5 minutes for questions). There will be 10 minutes between talks to handle introductions, and computer and sound. There will be a wireless lapel microphone for mobile speakers who do not wish to be restricted to the podium or a mounted stationary microphone for the speaker. It is anticipated that all talks will be zoomed to a remote audience and also recorded.

We will acknowledge all submitted presentations. Accepted presentations will need to be followed up with a 200-500 word abstract (single spaced in 12 point font, Word or equivalent format) with one graphic or photograph associated with the abstract desired by the author (but not inserted into the text), a 5-10 sentence speaker biography and a photographic headshot of the speaker (submitted separately), also in word format. All abstracts, biographies, and photos will be combined for creation into an abstract-program booklet. The speaker will also provide their preferred email address and contact phone number. This is NOT for the program but for communication with the symposium organizer.

Presenters will provide the digital talk in PowerPoint (pptx or ppt) and PDF format either on a flash drive or a downloadable internet site. Presenters will not be permitted to use their own computers. The symposium computer is a PC using an up-to-date Microsoft operating system. In addition, these talks may be recorded IF all speakers agree to recording in advance.



Please send submitted titles (and later abstracts and speaker biographies) by one of two methods: By mail: Mark Ivan Jacobson 1714 S. Clarkson St., Denver, CO 80210

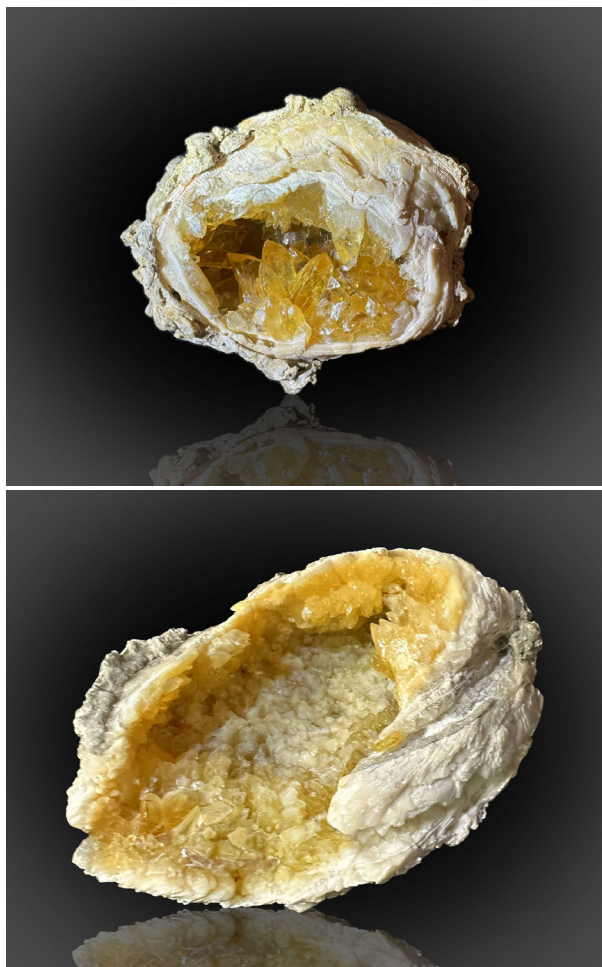
By email: [markivanjacobson@gmail.com](mailto:markivanjacobson@gmail.com)

Presentation titles must be submitted prior to July 31, 2025.

Abstracts, presentation images, speaker biographies, and photographic headshots must be submitted prior to September 1, 2025. The final abstract booklet with the speaker program is expected to be posted on the FM national website by December 15, 2025. The speakers and their presentation title will also appear in the January-February 2026 Rocks & Minerals magazine.

## Ruck's Pit Reopened

by Sean Stimac



In the 2024 September Newsletter, I reported that Ruck's Pit had been sold and was closing. This was a blow to the collecting community being infamous for its fossilized clam shells filled with crystalized calcite. It turns out the reports of this sale were fictitious. Frank and Kyndall Stallings took possession of the site late in 2024 and reopened it as the Fort Drum Crystal Mine.

It's now open to the public as a fee dig periodically throughout the year. They have a couple packages available to prospective collectors, all of which seem to be reasonable to this author considering the quality of material people are finding.

Ruck's Pit was a fairly rustic site involving significant work with a shovel to uncover few nice samples of gastropods, whelks and clams. Frank and Kyndall have cleaned up the site, have a cleaning station and even offer machine digs, increasing the amount of material that can be uncovered and collected.

To view available collection times and dates or to read up on the Fort Drum Crystal Mine, visit the following link: <https://www.thatcampingcouple-dig.com/>

Both images are courtesy of That Camping Couple and are used with permission



# Field Trip Report: Kentucky Geode Collecting

by Bill Stephens, PG



Attendees at the KRGC Kentucky Geode Field Trip, May 24, 2025. Bill Stephens, PG. Drone Photo.

The Kanawha Rock and Gem Club of Charleston West Virginia sponsored a great field trip to collect geodes at a private property location near Junction City, Boyle County, Kentucky on Saturday, May 24, 2025. President Susie Lamb was kind enough to invite me to attend and roughly 20 KRGC members attended including 4 juniors (see group shot below). Susie had said the site had not been collected for several years and of course everyone was excited about the prospect of finding lots of good geodes! I had collected at Phil Daly's, another site not far away, twice with MAGMA but had not been to this property before.



Collecting Geodes in White Oak Creek. Gravel bars are full of geodes, some broken, many solid ones and a few choice ones with quartz crystal-lined cavities. Note the dark greenish-gray bank with buff colored material on top and the turquoise colored "bare" stream bottom. The greenish gray rock exposed in the bank is shale of the Mississippian (age designation) New Providence Shale Member of the Borden Formation (see explanation below).

The site is located on private property (please do not contact this property owner-collecting is sporadic and only via organized club events with prior permission), southwest of Junction City, Kentucky on the southerly side of White Oak Road, on White Oak Creek and at the location of a former sand and gravel pit as marked on the geologic map(s) covering this general area, just below the confluence of the main branch of White Oak Creek and one of its unnamed tributaries. Geodes are prolific at this location and all along White Oak Creek, and comprise a substantial proportion of the creek gravel bars.

## Geode Geology Explained

The site is located in the southwesterly quarter of the Junction City 7.5' topographic quadrangle for which an older geologic map is available (see insert below). The Geodes we collect in stream beds in this area occur in Quaternary alluvial gravel and gravel stream terraces that rest "unconformably" on much older rocks of Mississippian Age within the Mississippian Plateau of south central Kentucky. All rocks in this part of the Plateau are nearly flat-lying, and the contacts between these older rocks are essentially on contour, or at predictable elevations from one hill to the next. Stream patterns are dendritic and look like tree branches, becoming ever more finely divided upstream.





A snapshot of General Geology Publication 981, USGS Junction City 7.5' Quadrangle Map, showing the site and Geology in the immediate vicinity.

We may find geodes in the stream gravels, but they did not form in the gravels. All the geodes we collected are derived from the St. Louis Limestone (map unit Msl), which is younger than the New Providence member of the Borden Formation. The St. Louis Limestone is described as: “Limestone, fine- to medium-grained, argillaceous, cherty, fossiliferous, geodiferous”. The St. Louis occurs at a higher elevation, (above 1300 feet) on the tops of hills to the northwest, west and southwest of the site, and upstream. Geodes weather out of the St. Louis and are transported typically by storm events, downstream along with chert, quartz and other more weather resistant materials. As high energy streamflow wanes, these coarser materials stop moving and accumulate on the stream floor as gravel bars. Normal streamflow tends to “weave” a snake-like pattern within the valley floor.

The St. Louis is also fossiliferous, and marine fossils include the rugose corals *Lithostrotian* and *Lithostrotianella* and the bryozoan *fenestrellina*. At least one rugose coral was found in the gravels by a junior member. The underlying Salem and Warsaw Limestones are described as “Limestone and sandstone. Limestone coarse- to very coarse-grained, crinoidal, partly silicified, partly cherty, partly cross-bedded. Sandstone, fine grained, calcareous: about 1.5 meters (5 feet) thick, occurring 1.5-2.5 meters above base of unit. Mapped in southwestern part of quadrangle”. This unit (map unit Msw, not shown on this older geologic map) is the likely source for the crinoid stem(s) found by me and others.



The newer geologic map (not included) suggest that some geodes may come from the upper portion of the Borden Formation in the southwestern part of the map area from a “geodiferous, cherty, dolomitic siltstone, 12-21 meters thick, with minor limestone”. Geodes were not reported in the Borden Formation in the older mapping and may indicate revision of unit designations/divisions.



View looking east showing the bluish to greenish gray siltstone of the New Providence member of the Borden Formation in the sidewall of the creek with geodiferous gravels resting on the weathered siltstone as terrace gravels and on the stream floor as gravel bars.



View looking westerly upstream showing gravel bars. Note all the geodes.



Closeup of a geode-rich gravel terrace deposit resting on the much older siltstone of the New Providence Formation.



View looking downstream to the east showing geode-bearing gravel bars. The bluish green stream floor is bare New Providence siltstone.

This field trip was excellent, very productive for everyone, well organized, highly accessible and inexpensive compared to some sites I have visited before. Permission is required and access should be coordinated through KRGC as a club event. Geodes may have been picked over on this trip, but new storm events will renew the gravels. I would recommend no more than one trip per year for this location.





Typical bucket of cracked geodes.



Personal best for the day, over 20", large crystals.

Thanks again to the KRGC for inviting me. For more information or to geek-out on the geology, visit these websites or copy and paste the link to your browser:

<https://pubs.usgs.gov/publication/gq981>

<chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://kgs.uky.edu/kgsweb/olops/pub/kgs/harrods-burg100Kgeo.pdf>

<https://www.uky.edu/KGS/rocksmineral/rm-rocks-geodes.php>

The PDF of the Harrodsburg 100K map contains all the unit descriptions generally accepted names and divisions on the geologic time scale for those interested. The Junctions City Geologic Quadrangle Map shows finer, but outdated divisions of the Borden Formation. Good luck and keep on Rockin!

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### The Mineralogical Society of America Resources and Coming Attractions

[minsocam.org](https://minsocam.org)

The Mineralogical Society of America (MSA) was founded in 1919 to advance mineralogy, crystallography, geochemistry, and petrology, and to promote their uses in other sciences, industry, and the arts. MSA encourages fundamental research about natural materials; supports the teaching of mineralogical concepts and procedures; and raises the scientific literacy of society on issues involving mineralogy in the widest sense. MSA encourages the preservation of mineral collections, displays, mineral localities, type minerals, and scientific data. MSA publishes the journal *American Mineralogist*, *Elements* magazine, the book series *Reviews in Mineralogy & Geochemistry*, textbooks, and monographs.

Anyone with an interest in mineralogy/petrology is eligible to join MSA. Information about membership is on the MSA home page: [minsocam.org](https://minsocam.org)



### Young Mineral Collectors

[youngmineralcollectors.org](https://youngmineralcollectors.org)

The Young Mineral Collectors group is an online, global mineral collecting community, in which over 1700 members from 50+ countries have come together to celebrate mineralogy, share knowledge, and create a positive environment for the newest generations of collectors. We welcome all collectors under 40 years of age.

The Friends of Mineralogy National Newsletter is issued quarterly, near the change in the four seasons – March, June, September and December. The Midwest Chapter distributes the Friends of Mineralogy National newsletter via an email notice from Google Groups that the newsletter is available. It is up to each member to download their own copy. The Pennsylvania Chapter sends the National newsletter out as an internet link. The Virginia Chapter sends the National newsletter out both as an internet link and attachment to the email. The New Jersey Chapter forwards the actual National newsletter via email. The Colorado Chapter has the National organization deliver the newsletter directly to its members. The Mississippi Valley Chapter has National organization send the newsletter directly to its members. The Pacific Northwest Chapter forwards the actual National newsletter via email. The Southern California Chapter President receives the National newsletter and emails the pdf copy directly to the chapter members. National only members receive their National newsletter as an attachment to their email. All Chapter presidents, at-large board members, and affiliated societies also receive the National newsletter directly by email. The National newsletter is also available directly from the National Friends of Mineralogy Website at: <https://www.friendsofmineralogy.org/newsletters-2/>