

Four Corners Gem and Mineral Club

September 2024 Newsletter



Message from the President

Sometimes I forget the powerful influence of rocks and minerals on people. The other day I met a person who carries a beautiful terminated clear quartz crystal, and I could tell it meant so much to her. The emotions that rocks, minerals, gems, and the Earth awakens in people is amazing. That is one of the fun aspects of being an educator. I encourage all of you to take a moment to share your works and treasures with people so they, too, can enjoy what we do.

Classes in September

On September 4, a training session on using the acetylene torch is being offered from 6:00-6:30 pm at the Club. This is a reminder that you must complete a training session before using this tool.

Other classes offered in September include Introduction to Lost Wax Casting (September 7-8), Introduction to Wire Arts (September 14), and Introduction to Silversmithing and Statement Ring (September 27-28). If you are interested in any of these courses, check this link <http://www.durangorocks.org/events.html> for the times, cost, and other information.

Social Hour

Our Events Committee has organized a social hour from 6:00-7:30 pm on September 25 at the Club. This is a chance to meet new people and reconnect with old friends. The discussion will be on the history of Gem Village which had one of the original Gem Clubs in the area. Bring a snack to share if you want.

Open Shop

A full schedule of Open Shop is listed at <http://www.durangorocks.org/events.html>.

Field Trips and Lectures

A new Events Committee has been established for the purpose of organizing these popular gatherings and learning opportunities. Stay tuned for updates and please contribute your energy or feedback to this Committee.

Events Around the Region

If you are interested in finding shows and other events in the area, you can find them at <https://www.rockandmineralshows.com/>

FCGMC Steward Coordinator

Charlotte Lenssen is our Steward Coordinator for the Club. If you have questions for Charlotte or want to become a shop steward the please contact her at charlotte_lenssen@yahoo.com

Reminder about Membership Dues

It is easy to forget to pay your membership dues, but they are particularly important to support the activities and events that we offer, as well as tools and equipment. You can renew with a Steward at the Club during Open Shop or online at <https://www.durangorocks.org/join-clubrenew.html>

If you are not sure if your membership has lapsed, send me a request to check at gonzales_d@fortlewis.edu and I will find out.

We Need You! Club Elections are Coming Soon

October 1 from 6:30-7:45 pm at the Club is our annual elections for officers and directors. This year we are seeking a **President and Vice President**. If you are interested in serving as Treasurer that is an option, as well.

The management of the Club is important to keep it operating and accessible. If you are interested in being considered for a position, let me know at gonzales_d@fortlewis.edu

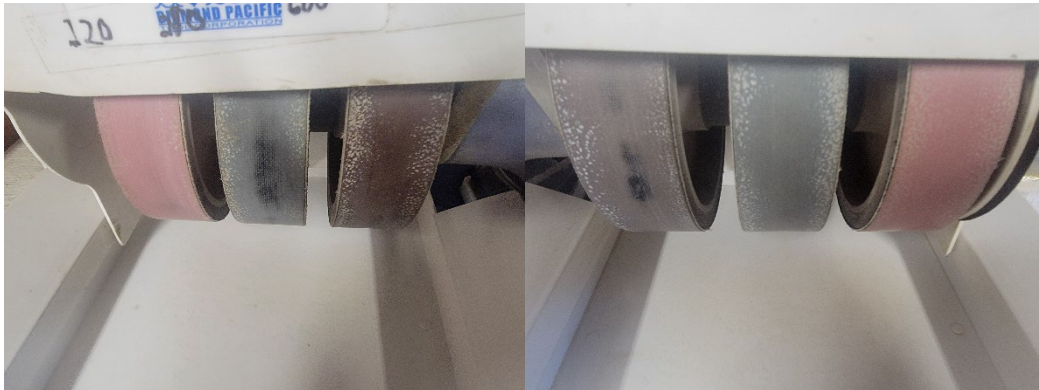
Issues at the Club

It has come to the attention of the FCGMC that we have issues with people NOT paying for use of the Shop during Open Shop. With such frequent use of equipment and tools, the Club now has more limited funds to pay for repairs and replacement equipment, and most of the purchases are costly.

All members need to pay the minimal use fees when you come to Open Shop. The cost of using the equipment in the Club is \$5.00 per open shop session. This amount must be paid in total before you will be permitted to use the Club. Please do not promise to pay later or pay a partial fee with the intent to pay the balance later. Pay \$5.00 for each visit. If you use a punch card, make sure a steward marks and signs off on the card for each visit.

Several pieces of equipment are in poor condition or disrepair because of improper use. If a Steward offers to assist you in learning the proper use of a pieces of equipment please take their advice. Not only does it lengthen the life of our equipment, it increases your technical skills and knowledge.

A good example is illustrated in the photograph of the Genie polishing machine shown below. Do you note the problem?



There are several polishing wheels on the Genie where the diamond grit is worn off in a particular area due to improper use. A stone should be polished across the entire wheel, not in a given spot which will lead to excessive and uneven wear. These polishing wheels are expensive, so proper use of the equipment is a must. If you are a user and are uncertain how to use equipment properly, please take time to let a steward train you in proper technique. Continued

misuse of equipment and need for repairs could lead to us having to discontinue the use of a given piece of equipment. Please take care to use equipment properly for everyone's benefit.

Our 2024-25 Scholarship Recipient

Each year, a student from the Department of Geosciences at Fort Lewis College is awarded the Four Corners Gem and Mineral Club Scholarship. The recipient this year is Danica Coen, and below is her biographical sketch. Danica is in my Mineralogy class this fall, and I am going to encourage her to join the FCGMC. The Department is excited to have her in our program.

Thank you for sharing, Danica.

A Message from Danica

Hello! My name is Danica Coen, and I am so thankful to be chosen as a recipient of the Four Corners Gem and Mineral Scholarship. I grew up in Bloomfield, New Mexico, where the desert landscapes are truly incredible. Some of my best childhood memories are of exploring these desert areas with my brother and our grandma. Each walk was like a new adventure as I collected rocks that felt like little treasures. My grandma would kindly carry them home for me until I was big enough to carry them myself.

I decided to study geology because it is a field that lets me learn through hands-on experiences, which is how I learn best. Geology is not just about studying textbooks or listening to lectures, but it is about getting out there, exploring the earth, and understanding how it works. I have always been drawn to nature and the idea of working directly with the earth, whether it is through studying rocks, understanding how landscapes form, or helping to find natural resources. Geology is the perfect blend of my love for learning by doing and my passion for understanding the planet we live on.

When I am not at school, I love spending time outdoors with my family. I enjoy walking and going on hikes with my dog, I also enjoy paddleboarding with my mom. Some of my favorite places to go paddleboarding are Farmington Lake, Vallecito Lake, and the Animas River. As I learn more about rocks and geologic formations, I find that being outside has become even more interesting. Now, I notice the different rock types and landscapes around me and can relate what I see to what I am learning in class. My time outdoors has become an extension of my studies which has made both my hobbies and education even more enjoyable.

As I continue my journey studying geology at Fort Lewis College, I am excited to see where this path will take me. Receiving the Four Corners Gem and Mineral Scholarship has inspired me even more to chase my dreams and make a difference in the field. I am so grateful for this support, and I am eager to use everything I learn to help us better understand our planet. I am

dedicated to making the most out of this opportunity, and I cannot wait to see what new discoveries are ahead of me. Thank you for believing in me and supporting my passion.

