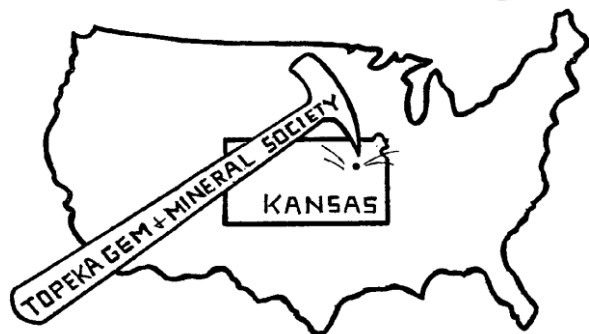


The Topeka Gem and Mineral Society, Inc.
 1934 SW 30th St. Topeka, KS 66611
 Rock2Plate@aol.com

THE GLACIAL DRIFTER



www.TopekaGMS.org or
 Facebook: Topeka Gem and Mineral Society Field Trips

The Topeka Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.
 Organized December 3, 1948

Member of Rocky Mountain Federation of
 Mineralogical Societies American Federation of
 Mineralogical Societies



The Glacial Drifter, Vol. 69, No. 4
 April 2026



The Purpose of The Topeka Gem & Mineral Society shall be exclusively educational and scientific: (1) to promote interest in geology and the lapidary arts; (2) to encourage the collection and display of rocks, gems, and minerals; (3) to encourage field trips and excursions of a geological, or lapidary nature; and (4) to encourage greater public interest and education in gems and minerals, cooperating with the established institutions in such matters.

Meetings: 4th Friday of each month, September to May, 7:15 pm, First Congregational Church, 1701 SW Collins Ave, Topeka, KS 66604. No meeting in December unless notified of a change. Picnic meetings are held, June, July and August.

Dues: Individual, \$15.00; Couple, \$20.00; Junior (under 18 years of age), \$5.00. Dues are collected in December for the following year. Send dues to: **Millie Mowry, Treasurer, 1934 SW 30th St, Topeka, KS 66611.**

www.TopekaGMS.org

2026 OFFICERS AND CHAIRS

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| President | Cinda Kunkler | 286-1790 | Cab of the Month | Renee Rippetoe | 314-280-6034 |
| 1 st Vice Pres. | David Dillon | 221-4315 | Cab of the Month | Jane Hanni | 845-8590 |
| 2 nd Vice Pres. | Desiree Gardner | 221-8862 | Field Trip Coord. | Chuck Curtis | 286-1790 |
| Secretary | Stacy Haug | 1-857-3350 | Publicity | Donna Hedge | 620-660-1651 |
| Treasurer | Millie Mowry | 267-2849 | Welcome/Registration | Harold Merrifield | 633-9745 |
| Directors | Doria Skinner | 231-9347 | Property | Chuck Curtis | 286-1790 |
| | Jim Baer | 1-256-2432 | AFMS Scholarship | Cinda Kunkler | 286-1790 |
| | Jacob Gardner | 221-4110 | Editor/Exchange Editor | Millie Mowry | 267-2849 |
| Historian | Cinda Kunkler | 286-1790 | Show Chairman | Millie Mowry | 267-2849 |
| Federation Rep | Chuck Curtis | 286-1790 | Show Dealer Chairman | Dave Dillon | 221-4315 |
| Corporation Agent | Millie Mowry | 267-2849 | Show Secretary | Cinda Kunkler | 286-1790 |
| Librarian | Cinda Kunkler | 286-1790 | Jr. Rockhound Leader | Dennis Hippe | 230-6729 |
| Web Master | Chad Skinner | 640-6617 | Show Case Coordinator | Cinda Kunkler | 286-1790 |

Area Code for all numbers is (785).

EXCHANGE BULLETINS WELCOME

For exchange newsletters contact the club via mailing address listed above or email at rock2plate@aol.com.
Permission is granted to reprint articles only if proper credit is given to the author, Glacial Drifter and the date.

Our meeting this month is April 24th (gather 7:00, Meeting 7:30) and the field trip for April will be on Sunday 4/26. The Publicity Committee is working on fund raisers, will you be willing to participate? Ideas are welcome. We hope to get word out about our change of venue for the annual show this year. It will be a New Venue for Old Fossils, Rocks, Jewelry and so much more at The Woodshed Event Center October 10th & 11th. May22nd is our last general meeting and since it is Memorial Day weekend, we will not schedule a Field Trip. June through August will be our club Picnic's (indoors) at First Congregational Church start time is 6:00, we will eat at 6:30. More information to come. Join us it is always fun. Be sure to bring a dish to share.

At our monthly Club Board Meeting it was decided that due to Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and school graduations, there will not be a field trip in the month of May.

Don't forget to wear your name badge to the meetings so we know who you are. If you want a plastic club badge, see Millie and she will order one for you.

See you at the meeting. Cinda Kunkler, President TTGMS

The program for the TGMS monthly meeting **THIS FRIDAY** 04/24/2026 will be presented by long time club member Brad Davenport who will be talking about Moose Lake, Minnesota Agate Days. Please make sure to clear your evening schedule and attend this meeting to show support for Brad and thank him for putting together this program for us!

Remember, we gather at First Congressional Church 1701 SW Collins at 7:15pm and the meeting officially begin as at 7:30pm. See you all there!

-Desiree, TGMS 2nd Vice President

Greetings Fellow Field Trippers,

A little more info on our upcoming Field Trip on April 26th to the Midwest Concrete Materials sand pit south of Wamego. This trip will be on a Sunday as they will be pumping sand 6 days a week and the EPA does not allow civilians around when the business is operating.

The address is 41050 K 99 Hwy, Wamego, KS. 66547. This is located south of Wamego and south of the Kansas River a little over a mile... or so ... ish. It will be on the west side of 99 Hwy. and close enough to the road that you won't miss it.

Be prepared for all weathers. Wear sensible footwear - boots would be good. Could be cold, wet, muddy. Will be ROCKY! We will be climbing on dirt/rock piles. Shouldn't need more than a small hand digging utensil. Always remember the sun screen. We will be limited to 2 - 5 gallon buckets per person. If you want to put them in a wagon that will be OK. Children are welcome. Owners **RULES** are to stay away from the water as the banks are sand and prone to **COLLAPSE!** Also stay away from any **machines, equipment, infrastructure!**

Remember please - this is a business and let's be respectful of the fact that the material we haul home is a gift from the owner and something they ordinarily sell. This is not sand for the kids sand pile or gravel for the driveway. To us this is rock and mineral specimens that we are fortune to be able to collect. Thanks for your attention to this matter. :o)

We will meet on the property at 9:30am for Sign-In, Group Photo and Instructions. We plan to be turned loose to prospect at 10:00 sharp. Hope to see Ya there!

Chuck Curtis, Field Trip Coordinator

TTGMS Event Calendar

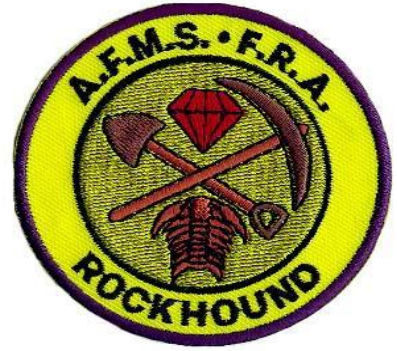
| APR 2026 | | | MAY 2026 | | |
|----------|---|--|----------|---|---|
| 1 | W | | 1 | F | |
| 2 | T | | 2 | S | McPherson Show |
| 3 | F | | 3 | S | McPherson Show |
| 4 | S | | 4 | M | |
| 5 | S | | 5 | T | Shop Classes are open 6-10pm at Brad's |
| 6 | M | | 6 | W | |
| 7 | T | | 7 | T | Jr RHD's Gather at 6 Meeting at 6:30p and Wire Wrap Class at Millie's 6:30p |
| 8 | W | | 8 | F | Board Meeting FCC 7 pm |
| 9 | T | | 9 | S | |
| 10 | F | | 10 | S | |
| 11 | S | | 11 | M | |
| 12 | S | | 12 | T | Shop Classes are open 6-10pm at Brad's |
| 13 | M | | 13 | W | |
| 14 | T | | 14 | T | Wire Wrap Class at Millie's 6:30p |
| 15 | W | | 15 | F | |
| 16 | T | | 16 | S | |
| 17 | F | | 17 | S | |
| 18 | S | | 18 | M | |
| 19 | S | | 19 | T | Shop Classes are open 6-10pm at Brad's |
| 20 | M | | 20 | W | |
| 21 | T | Shop Classes are open 6-10pm at Brad's | 21 | T | Wire Wrap Class at Millie's 6:30p |
| 22 | W | | 22 | F | General MTG FC Church gather at 7:15 Meeting 7:30 pm 1701 SW Collins |
| 23 | T | | 23 | S | |
| 24 | F | General MTG FC Church gather at 7:15 Meeting 7:30 pm 1701 SW Collins | 24 | S | |
| 25 | S | Field Trip --- Wichita Show | 25 | M | |
| 26 | S | Wichita Show | 26 | T | Shop Classes are open 6-10pm at Brad's |
| 27 | M | | 27 | W | |
| 28 | T | Shop Classes are open 6-10pm at Brad's | 28 | T | Wire Wrap Class at Millie's 6:30p |
| 29 | W | | 29 | F | |
| 30 | T | Wire Wrap Class at Millie's 6:30p | 30 | S | |
| | | | 31 | S | |

As A Reminder!

If you are wanting to take a class in Silversmithing or wire wrapping you are to call either Jim Baer at 785-256-2432 or email him at jimbaer73@gmail.com, the Monday before class to let Jim know you will be there. For wire wrapping contact Millie Mowry at 785-267-2849 or email rock2plate@aol.com, as she holds class at her house.

JR ROCKHOUND Classes & Reminders

Here are reminders of the next months of classes: **First Congregational Church, 1701 SW Collins Ave., Topeka, KS.** Sign in starting at 6:00 pm and classes starting at 6:30 pm. 1st Thursday of each month.



<https://www.facebook.com/TopekaGMSJuniorRockhounds>

To register for the Junior Rockhounds or any of the classes, email:

Dennis Hippe at: go.purple@hotmail.com

Next Class: May 7, 2026, Fluorescent Minerals, by Will Gilliland

Reminder: If you want to earn the patches from the classes that you have attended you need to turn in your homework assignments.

Rocks for Juniors

Reminder to bring any extra rocks you might have that you would like to donate to the Junior Rockhound Club. We are trying to let the kids go on a "field trip" after class. Some of them really don't have much of a chance to add to their collection. We will have a table set up at the back of the room that they can come to and let them each pick out four rocks that you have graciously donated. This way they can add to their collection. Thank you so much for your contributions. This wouldn't be possible without you.

Dennis Hippe

The TTGMS Library

In the TTGMS Library there are well over 100 books to choose from That cover a vast array of subjects of lapidary art and geology. The library has currently moved to the church storage area, contact Cinda if interested in checking out a book.

Dillons Community Reward Program

[MM1]

The Topeka Gem & Mineral Society has enrolled with the Community Rewards with Dillon's Store. You can enroll your shopper's card at: www.dillons.com/communityrewards once you sign up it will take about 7 to 10 days to be activated and our Club to start earning the rewards. At the bottom of your Kroger receipt, you will notice "At your request, Kroger is donating to 'your organization name'".

If you have any other questions email DCR@dillonstores.com

(You do not lose your fuel points).

Oct 2025 to Dec 2025.....Rebate amount \$37.33 (paid in Jan)

Jan 2026 to Mar 2026.....Rebate amount \$39.93



CAB OF THE MONTH FOR MARCH
2026

Matt Filby – Member Jewelry



Unakite & Copper

Donna Hedge -



Specimen Sphalerite Zinc

Shirley Schulz – Lapidary Art
Bubble Gum Tree

Doria Skinner – Member Cab
Victoria Stone



Member Jewelry #
Lapidary
Art
1
Bubble
Gum Tree

Iridescence Does Not Always Mean Innocence

Angel Doran, Secretary, Ozarks Gem & Mineral Society

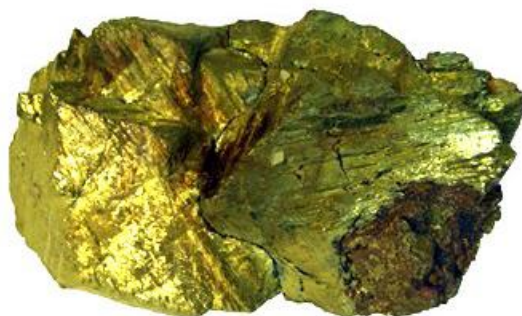
From the June, 2025 Chert Chatter

Some minerals catch your eye with a dazzling array of metallic blues, purples, and golds. It's a trait so appealing that many collectors and lapidaries go out of their way to seek out these "peacock" specimens. But those shimmering colors may not be harmless glints of nature's artistry – they might be signs of chemical instability and severe toxicity.

Not All Iridescence Is Created Equal

In minerals like labradorite, moonstone, and precious opal, the iridescent effect is caused by light interference through internal structures – specifically, thin-film interference, diffraction, or twinning lamellae. These are stable, solid, and safe to cut, assuming standard precautions are used.

But in minerals like the iridescence is a product altered material that change mineral's surface. These chemically reactive, rich in toxic elements.



covellite, bornite, and chalcopyrite, of surface oxidation, thin layers of the way light reflects off the oxidation layers are often structurally weak, and sometimes

Chalcopyrite from Dal'negorsk, Russia. Photo by VikSl (V. Slyotov) on mindraw.web.ru,, via Wikimedia Commons

Surface Breakdown = Airborne Risk

When these minerals are cut, ground, or even handled extensively, those delicate surface films can flake off or release dust containing mercury, arsenic, lead, cadmium, or selenium. The darker and more rainbow-hued the specimen, the more likely it's undergone oxidation, and the more cautious you should be. A polished cabochon might look safe, but if the polish came from a dry grinding wheel without proper ventilation or protection, someone likely inhaled a toxic substance to make it sparkle.

The Double-Edged Beauty

This doesn't mean that you should avoid all iridescent specimens – just know what you're working with. A flashy slab of bismuthinite or iridescent galena deserves a different level of respect than a rainbow sheen on an opal.

Ask questions. Research the locality. Know the chemistry. If the mineral contains sulfur, copper, bismuth, arsenic, or mercury, and it's glowing like an oil slick, don't assume it's safe to work with.

When In Doubt: Wet It Down Or Leave It Alone

- Always cut with water and proper ventilation.
- Never dry-grind iridescent sulfide minerals.
- Wear a respirator, not just a dust mask.

- Handle specimens carefully. Even storing them improperly can lead to slow breakdown and contamination over time.

Source: Midwest Federation of Mineralogical and Geological Societies, April 2026

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The Topeka Gem & Mineral Society General Meeting March 27, 2026 at 7:30 p.m.

Call to Order: President Cinda Kunkler calls the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. Harold Merrifield reports there are 38 members and 1 guest present. Four door prizes were given out.

Approval of the Minutes: Minutes from the previous meeting were not printed in this month's Drifter.

Treasurer's Report: Millie Mowry reports the club account balance. Several renewal memberships were paid for tonight. We also have several new members present tonight who were welcomed into the club.

Cinda helped Millie get this month's edition of the Drifter out, but didn't get all of the winners for Cab of the Month, etc. and pictures listed. There is a list of winners and photos available to look at tonight at the voting table.

Old Business: There are coupons on the front table available for anyone who wants to take some to hand out. Reminder to members that for those who shop at Dillons, you can sign up for the Community Rewards Program that gives money back to our club. This program is free to sign up for; Cinda has more information on this for those interested.

Communications: Cinda reports there are some shows coming up: The Wichita show is April 24th-26th, and the McPherson show will be held the first weekend in May. Cinda received a notification from the First Congregational Church informing the club that there will be a small raise in the rent fee since we are utilizing the church more.

Show: Dave Dillon is not here tonight. Millie reports that Dave sent an email stating we have one confirmed dealer for the show (Purdy Silver) and one dealer who will not be attending as he is retiring (Marv). He does have one other prospective dealer who is supposed to have sent a check this week, but he has not been able to get his mail. After holding our show in the Ag Hall for many years, we are moving locations to the Woodshop this year due to price increases. If anyone knows of any other location that would be good for the following year, please let Cinda know. We have put out feelers for security options for the show, but have only received one response back so far.

Publicity: Donna Hedge reports the next committee meeting will be April 15th at 6:30 p.m. at the Elmont United Methodist church. Anyone who is interested is invited to attend as it is always good to have new ideas and energy brought to the group. We are trying to do some fundraisers with businesses in town. We are planning to have an event at Pineapple Dream from 4:00- 8:00 p.m. on a weeknight in May. At these fundraisers, we will hand out coupons & flyers for the club while we are there. Members are asked what other places they might be interested in; suggestions were made for Texas Roadhouse and Crispy & Co. on Wanamaker. If anyone has any other suggestions, please let a committee member know.

The World Cup is coming this summer. Downtown Topeka is planning to put on some activities during that time and one club member offered their place of business as a potential spot to set up in front of to help gain more exposure for the club

Field Trip: There is a field trip scheduled tomorrow to Mike Meiers' sandbar. We will meet at the Tecumseh Park at 9:30 a.m., and will leave to drive together to the sandbar at 10:00 a.m. Will Gilliland reports that he has a 4-H Geology field trip scheduled to the sandbar which will take place at the same time. After the sandbar, he has two more stops planned that he invites club members to join in on. The first will be 6th & Wanamaker where they will be collecting fossils & rocks and Wil Gilliland, will be discussing the stratigraphy of the cut there. The second will be Burnett's Mound on Skyline Drive where he will talk about the geography of the area. In April, we are looking at going to Midwest Concrete and Materials in Wamego. The pit area there has doubled in size and there are some new piles. We might have to go on a Sunday since they are busy pumping and cannot have people there while they are operating. Anyone with ideas for field trip locations, please let Chuck know.

Junior Rockhounds: Dennis is not here tonight. Classes are held the first Thursday of each month. This month's class will be "Fossils" taught by Pat Gilliland. Everyone is always welcome to come and learn something. We had a good group last month with 11 students present.

Webmaster: Nothing new to report.

Shop: Brad Davenport reports everything has been going fine at the shop. If anyone is coming out this Tuesday, he will be closing down at nine.

seconds. Motion carries and the meeting is adjourned at 8:05 p.m. to the evening's program - "Explore the World of Gemstone Faceting" by Mike Gillespie from Midland Gems.

Submitted by: Stacy Haug, TTGMS Secretary

QUARTZ CRYSTALS & Rain

Probably anyone who has gone to Arkansas and bought quartz from one of many dealers who have quartz crystals sitting on tables in their yard has noted the big variations to quality and prices, not only between tables but between dealers. The cause of this variation is usually based on the quality sorting which the dealer has done to set his prices. What characteristics do you look for that make up quality?

Naturally, size is important, a large crystal will cost more per pound than a small crystal with the same characteristics. Also considered under quality are crystal form and perfection and the lack of breaks and dings or other damages from underground movement and mining. Clarity and color are obvious factors to consider. Any inclusions or color that distract from the crystal lower its quality. Distinct phantoms and other inclusions can add to it. A slightly smoky, yellow, or purple tinge may enhance the quality, but too much may lower it. These are obvious characteristics that anyone can spot and then use to rate the quartz.

Two factors may be more subjective, but these can separate the beginner from the well experienced. Aesthetics and be extremely important, particularly for crystal groups. Do the crystals stand upright? Will the crystal group stand without assistance? Are the best crystals going to be viewed when the crystal groups are placed in their best sitting position? Is the group symmetrical, or is some other artistic quality displayed when it is viewed? Does it have a minimum of matrix that distracts from it and adds to its weight? These are just a few things to consider when viewing specimens for aesthetics. To me, the thing that sets off a good crystal or crystal group and makes it a great one, is its brightness. Some have it, some do not. However, if you buy crystals in the rain, they all have it. So never buy quartz crystals in the rain --- I guarantee a big disappointment for you when you unwrap the later.

Source: a reprint from the Drifter: April 2004

White Buffalo Turquoise

When discovered in the Dry Creek Mine on the Shoshone Indian Reservation near Battle Mountain, Nevada in 1993, they (the discoverers) were not sure what it was. Because of its hardness, it was decided to send it to have it assayed. Their suspicions proved correct. It was, in fact, white turquoise. It was not until 1996, however, that it was finally made into jewelry.

The Shoshone Indians are not known for jewelry work and, as a consequence, the Shoshones' sell or trade the white turquoise to the Navajo in Arizona who then work it into jewelry. Because white turquoise is as rare as a white buffalo, the Indians call it "White Buffalo" turquoise.

Turquoise gets its color from the heavy metals in the ground where it forms. Blue turquoise forms when there is copper present, which is the case with most Arizona turquoise. Green turquoise forms where iron is present, the case with most Nevada Turquoise. White turquoise forms where there are no heavy metals present, which turns out to be a very rare occurrence. To date, no other vein of white turquoise has been discovered anywhere else. When this current vein runs out, that will be the last of it.

Source: a reprint for the Drifter April 2001