

Lake George Gem & Mineral Club

Club News, May, 2025



The May meeting will be held at the Lake George Charter School at 9AM on May 10.

John Rakowski will present his popular “Rockhounding 101” class, with a field trip to the Club claim afterwards. Here’s John’s description:

Rockhounding 101 by John Rakowski

This presentation will focus on collecting ideas and techniques in the Pikes Peak batholith for new members. You will see examples of the commonly seen minerals of the area and of pegmatite material. We’ll discuss what a pegmatite is and what pockets are, plus hints on how to find them. We will also discuss how to tell the difference between quartz, topaz, and fluorite – all three often look similar to many people. After the meeting, members who pre-registered will take a field trip to the Club claim.

John is a retired professional geologist with a career as a petroleum exploration and development geologist. After working for a major oil company and independent companies, he started his own company in 1984, providing consulting services in exploration, development, and acquisition of oil and gas properties. He has been an active mineral/fossil collector for more than 60 years, with experience in the Lake George area since the early 1960’s. In addition to being a long-term member and having served as an officer of the LGGMC for many years, John is also the President of the Pikes Peak Historical Society, which operates the museum in Florissant.

Field Collecting Notes John Rakowski 4/2023

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.

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 areas where collecting is allowed and any safety information for that site that is provided. On a club trip by car, follow at a close but safe distance from the vehicle in front of you. Be sure before the trip that you have plenty of gas and that your vehicle is prepared for the trip. 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 home. 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 in boxes with the specimens. Stay away from mine openings unless you’re with specially trained and equipped people.

Safety and comfort: Make careful mental note of landmarks and surroundings so you can find your way back. Remember to bring the following: • Safety glasses (polycarbonate) or safety goggles to protect your eyes, • A 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

Lake George Gem & Mineral Club

May, 2025

Mt. Antero • Sunscreen, insect spray, toilet paper (TP can be good wrapping for delicate specimens) • Plenty of water, and food if you'll be gone most of the day • 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. Estwing PaleoPick is a good general tool. • Shovels, small folding or large short handled • 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 and 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 sledgehammer 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

Additional considerations: • Marking your small tools with bright colored paint will make them easier to keep track of. • When you find your "goodies" dig around them (not right on the edge of the specimen) 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.

↘ The Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies' annual meeting is Sept. 19-21. This year, the meeting will be held in **Grand Junction**, so it would be great if our club could send one or two representatives. The club usually allows some motel/meal expenses, so, if you're interested, talk to Dave Bruess or one of the other officers. There will be 3 field trips (Douglas Pass fossils; Yellow Cat agate; and Book Cliffs baryte) and a gem and mineral show with 40 dealers! If you would like more info, contact Bob Carnein ccarnein@gmail.com or Betty Bowles bbowles2@gmail.com.

↘ Speaking of field trips, here is a list of upcoming Club trips from our field-trip coordinator, **Cory Miller**:

- Club claims prospecting 101 after May meeting
- Club claims prospecting 101 Monday May 12th
- Arroya gulch garnets May 17th I need a leader or this trip will be cancelled.
- Smoky Hawk June 7th

Please read the Code of Ethics and Field Trip Rules at least once a season. These are found on our websites and are required reading prior to attending any field trip. **Go read them now** if you haven't yet done so in 2025! A significant percentage of the questions we get clearly demonstrate that folks haven't read these required documents. **The dog policy is documented there.**

Please re-read the field trip event in the week leading up to the trip. Many trips require that you print and sign a liability waiver for the mine. The field trip leader and the mine operator often will have extra blank copies at the meeting point or at the mine, but sometimes they run out; **it is your responsibility to bring all required signed documents and do any required reading prior to the trip**, as stated in the field-trip event. If there is a fee, often the mine is cash-only, **bring exact cash**. Some mines have minerals for sale on-site at very discounted rates, so maybe stash a little extra cash or blank check in the wallet just in case you are tempted.

On field trips, **please take pictures!** As a field trip leader, I tend to get busy helping folks and/or digging myself, and I forget to capture the fun that folks are having. It is VERY helpful to the field-trip leader and club in general if you take some pictures to share. Recommendations are taking pictures of yourself or groups of people "in action", and also take pictures of your finds. Then send these over to the field trip leader, myself, Betty Bowles (newsletter) or post to our Facebook Group page.

We would love for anyone to summarize their field-trip experience, including pictures, for our monthly newsletter. Please consider sharing your experience, contact Betty Bowles or myself for more information, or just go with your style (maybe it's a poem, a drawing, or ???) and send us your experience! Note that we can submit member-written articles for national competition, and many club members have been awarded for their writings in past years!

When on a field trip please make sure you **thank the volunteer leader.** Our amazing field-trip schedule is only available because of the many volunteers. Luckily, leading trips is pretty simple, so ask questions of your leader or myself and proactively considering offering a small amount of your time to the club!

↘
↘ And, speaking of mineral shows:



A poster for the 25th Annual Lake George Gem & Mineral Show. It features a specimen of smoky quartz and fluorite on a microcline. The text reads: "LAKE GEORGE 25th Annual Gem & Mineral Show", "Aug. 15-17, 2025", "Smoky Quartz & Fluorite on Microcline, Quist Backyard Pocket, Lake George, CO", and a map showing the location near Florissant and Divide. Below the map, it says: "25th Annual Lake George Gem & Mineral Show", "Hwy 24 (East of Post Office) (4 mi. W of Florissant)", "Lake George, CO 80827", "www.lggmclub.org", "August 15-17, 2025 (9-5 Daily)", "FREE ADMISSION & PARKING", and "30+ VENDORS - Auction, Local Specimens, Rocks, Minerals, Fossils, Gems, Beads, Jewelry, Lapidary and More!".

ADDITIONAL COMING EVENTS OUTSIDE THE LGGM CLUB: (Nearby gem, mineral, fossil, and geology events that you may enjoy.)

- **Cañon City Geology Club** meets on the 2nd Monday of the month at 6PM in the United Methodist Church, Cañon City
- **Columbine Gem & Mineral Society**, meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month, 6:30PM in the meeting room, Mt. Shavano Manor, 525 W. 16th (at J St.), Salida
- **Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society**, meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7PM in the Mt. Carmel Veteran's Service Center, 530 Communication Circle, Colorado Springs;
- **Pueblo Rockhounds**, meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM in the Westminster Presbyterian Church, 10 University Circle, Pueblo.

👇👇 Mineral-show coordinator **Carol Kinate** reports that planning for our annual August show is moving along. Here's a reminder:

SAVE THE DATE – AUGUST 15-17, 2025 (LGGMC Annual Show)

"2025" SHOW POSTCARDS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT EVERY MEETING

☐ **Show Volunteer Sign-up sheets will be available starting in May. Come to the meeting and sign up!**

Carol Kinate, Show Chair
719-648-9015 (text/call)

The Lake George Gem & Mineral Club uses funds received from their annual Lake George Gem & Mineral Show to provide scholarships to local Park and Teller County students. Additional funds are used to support graduate-level students doing geological studies at the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument or students doing work for the Western Museum of Mining & Industry or Colorado School of Mines Geology Museum. Notices are sent to all the high schools in Park and Teller counties detailing how to apply for the scholarships. The deadline for applications is April 1. The LGGMC has a strong commitment to support local students in beginning a study program in college leading to a career in the Earth sciences.

👇👇 Here's a field-trip report sent by our Treasurer, Karen Vogl:
Hello,

We had a great dig on Saturday. Everyone found lots. The weather was beautiful. Everyone showed up. When there were just a few left, we thought we saw a bear coming over the back ridge. It was big and hard to tell. Got my field glasses (big ones) and it was a lone buffalo. Kinda cool.

The only bad thing that happened was, early when I went in to pay, Dave Harvey said the group on Wednesday left a 7-foot-deep hole. He came out when we went and sure enough. I told him I was surprised it was us (2 other groups there Saturday but everyone filled in good). I apologized, we filled 1/2 way in (a lot of work), said we'd come out and fill it in futher. At the meeting we need to go over the Code of Ethics again, I guess.
Wanted you to know.
Thanks, Karen

LGGMClub Recently Lost Two Long-Time Members
Bob Carnein

It is with great sorrow that we report that two of our most faithful members have passed away. Here are brief memories of Filip E. Babitz and Steven W. Gorman.



Filip E. Babitz (1947-2025) passed away on Feb. 2, 2025. Fil and his wife Valerie, who survives, were long-time active members of the LGGMC, along with Pueblo Rockhounds, Cañon City Geology Club, and the Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society. Despite chronic health issues, Fil loved to come to Club meetings and field trips. He and Val donated both time and hundreds of pounds of minerals to the Club for our silent auctions and annual gem and mineral show. Fil was a retired teacher and coach who loved polishing stones, carpentry, and yard work. Memorial donations may be made to the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region, 4600 Eagleridge Place, Pueblo, CO 81008'



Steven W. Gorman (1951-2025) passed away on April 12, 2025. LGGMClub members will remember Steve for his generosity in hosting many Club trips to his Gold City claims, near Round Mountain Campground, northwest of Lake George. He was always happy to show us his latest finds, including colorful chrysocolla coatings and mineral oddities that were new to him, and was always eager to learn about new minerals found by Club members at Gold City. He also loved to fish and tell stories by the campfire. His spirit lives on in the mountains he cherished and the family he adored.



Monthly Mineral Quiz

Monthly Mineral for May, 2025 (Carnein photos and collection)



This month's mineral (actually a subgroup of minerals) is very common but is seldom conspicuous, so, unless you're from California or "back East", you probably have not collected it. Mindat, however, lists dozens of Colorado localities, typically in metamorphic rocks, where it forms from alteration of olivine and other minerals. Although monoclinic, this is one mineral you won't see as well formed crystals—it is typically massive or fibrous. In fact, one variety is, historically, an important asbestos mineral. Physical properties include moderately low H (3 ½ to 4), low SG (2.5 to 2.6), vitreous to greasy or silky luster, and green to brown color. Cleavage is usually not obvious or is curved. It sometimes resembles jade but can be distinguished by its relatively low hardness. What is this common metamorphic mineral?



Last Month's Mineral: Dolomite, $\text{CaMg}(\text{CO}_3)_2$

This specimen came from a limestone/dolostone quarry in Indiana and shows the typical pinkish color, pearly luster, and curved "saddle shaped" crystal faces of this very common carbonate mineral. Typical crystals are rhombohedra, and twinning is common. Beginners may have trouble distinguishing between dolomite and calcite, but testing with dilute HCl or warm vinegar produces slow effervescence in dolomite, whereas calcite fizzes rapidly. Dolomite is one member of the dolomite group, which includes several other minerals, the most common being ankerite, $\text{Ca}(\text{Fe},\text{Mg})(\text{CO}_3)_2$. Dolomite is a major source of magnesium for agricultural uses. Replacement of limestone (calcite) by dolostone in saline lagoons results in opening of pore spaces, which can become important reservoirs of groundwater and petroleum. Although it is most common in sedimentary rocks, dolomite can occur in large amounts in metamorphic rocks (dolomitic marble), as well. There are many localities in Colorado, none of them particularly noteworthy.

