



# The Tidewater Prospector



Newsletter for the Tidewater Gem and Mineral Society May 2021 Virginia Beach, VA

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Newsletter is best read  
using Acrobat Reader.

## **Notes from the President**

by Robin Stoughton



Hello everyone, hope you are all doing good. Thanks to all of you who came to the last meeting! We will be having a meeting this month, Friday May 21st at 7:30 pm.

Rosanne will be doing the program on her last trip to Colorado where she went to the Denver Show and Denver Natural Science Museum.

Thanks to Caitie for bringing all her gem mining treasures for last month's meeting! She had some super nice gems!

No workshops anytime soon.

Hospitality: We still cannot bring food to the meeting, but you can bring your own drinks.

All the same rules still apply to everyone, face coverings are required by the church and no more than 50 people can attend the meeting. Everyone has to sign in when you arrive.

No word on the July Treasures of the Earth show yet; praying it's not cancelled again. Hopefully we will hear from Ellen by June.

Hope to see more members at this month's meeting.

REMINDER: Get all of your newsletter info to Judy by the 3rd of each month

REMINDER MEMBERS: most of you have NOT paid your dues for this year! They are PAST DUE and have to be paid by June or you will no longer get the newsletter, be allowed to attend workshops or go on club sponsored field trips. Everyone has had more than enough time to pay them so get them in please. Thanks to all of you who have paid on time.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**



It was great to be able to hold a club meeting in April and get back to a "sense of normalcy"!

In April, the club raised \$230 when 20 adults either renewed or joined the club. That brings club membership to 49 adults and 2 children.

Please welcome the following new members to the club: **Fleater ALLEN, Gordon JONES, and Margith McKEAN!**

The paid raffle raised \$61 and the sale of 3 T-shirts raised \$30. Other expenses were routine and the treasury balance is about \$3,117.

## **CLUB DUES EXTENDED Until JUNE!**

Since the club has not been able to meet this year until April, payment of Club Dues for 2021 has been **extended until June!** You can either pay at the club meetings or send dues to the club's P.O. Box. Those members NOT renewing their membership by June will not receive a club newsletter after June.

**Just a reminder:** Club dues for 2021 are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children under 17



Due to our secretary not being at our last meeting to take minutes, there are no minutes to be printed this month.

## ROGER'S REFLECTIONS

By Roger Tiangco

THE SUNBEAMS ARE TWINKLING, THE AIR, SOFT AND FREE. IT'S TELLING A MESSAGE FOR YOU AND FOR ME - IT'S SPRING, IT'S SPRING - WE'RE ON THE LUSTY MONTHS OF SPRING! THE VERNAL SPRING EQUINOX HAD STARTED MARCH 21, 2021. THE UTMOST SIGN OF SPRING HERE IN VIRGINIA – IS THE CHANGING TEMPERATURE AFTER THE DOLDRUMS OF THE GRAY MONOTONE OF WINTER. YES! We REJOICE IN THE FRESH ABUNDANCE OF ITS CINEMATIC KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLORS - RED, WHITE, PINK, PURPLE, BLUE, BOWERS OF VARIOUS FLOWERS CLINGING HELD UPHIGH TO THE SUN. WE GET UP IN THE MORNING - HEARING THE BIRDS CHIRPING INCESSANTLY - AS THOUGH RECITING CHEERFUL INCANTATION OF HOW WONDERFUL NATURE IS!

**EMERALD:** Beryllium Aluminum Silicate, valuable green rock specimen, a variety of the mineral Beryl, its beautiful green color is attributed to the presence of a small amount of Chromium. Inclusions are common in Emeralds, most of this beryl specimens are “opaque” – almost to the tone of Jadeite. Weighing over 60 grams, the lucky winner will now provide a new home to this rock specimen from Brazil. It is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest country in the World, and the largest in South America, where 40% of the population lives in the Southern part – known as the “Heartland”, that contains some of the country’s most productive farmland and valuable mineral deposits. Also, in Muzo Valley (Colombia) and the Ural Mountains of USSR - gemmy Emeralds are found. Here in the USA – best collecting areas includes: California, Connecticut, Maine & North Carolina.

**BISMUTH:** A chemical element symbol “Bi” (under Periodic Table) – sometimes referred to as “bismite”. The winner of this metallic mineral will now provide a new home to this over 69 grams specimen. It does contain bismuth trisulfide with small amount of copper, lead, tin and iron. In medical field - it is used as antisyphilitic and anti-infectives. Very rarely that Bismuth grows over the size of a botton (small globule of metal) – but this Bismuth, is an exception to the rule! Though very rare in nature, natural occurrences were noted in California, Connecticut and Utah.

**PETRIFIED WOOD:** A sawed-off rough specimen – weighing over 14 grams, has stirred some quizzical admiration at the Meeting, is it Jasperized, Opalized or Agatized? The winner lucked-out on the rock-specimen, because – as we have known already, Petrified wood has undergone a process called “petrification” – that is, the tree got buried in the ground for millions of years. This may include burial in place by volcanic ash or it got enveloped in sediments during floods. The winner was all-smile claiming the prize, for like most of us – we are aware of its value and how difficult it is to find a piece of this rock. We are not allowed to collect such specimens on Public Land - administered by Bureau of Land Management without their blessing and get a NO! NO! especially in National Parks. Best collecting areas: Arizona, California, North Dakota, Michigan and Washington.

**APATITE:** Calcium fluorine-chlorine-hydroxyl phosphate, a mineral specimen, that developed in many igneous rocks and may form also in certain metamorphic rocks. The winner of this greenish-rhombohedral rock specimen was all smiles claiming this prize. Although it is the commonest of all phosphorous bearing mineral - the natural shiny six-sided nature, did “play a number” and it weigh over 78 grams. From the Greek word “apate” – meaning allusion to its being confused with other minerals. Thanks to our Editor Ms. Judy H. – as she corrected my erroneous labeling it as “Epidote”. Best collecting area: California and Massachusetts.

**PECTOLITE:** Hydrous calcium sodium silicate. Grayish white in color. Pectolite commonly develops in cavities of basalt volcanic rocks. Associated minerals – commonly with Zeolite, Datolite, Calcite and Prehnite. Pectolite have radial fibrous structure emanating from a sharp point. Pectolite has a hardness of 4 to 5 in Mohs scale. Weighing over 11 grams – the winner will now provide a new home to this unusual gem variety of mineral. Best collecting areas: Arkansas and New Jersey.

### DOOR PRIZES:

Some lucky winners are now enjoying the following beautiful gems/specimens:

Jasper Pendants (2 each)    Quartz Crystals specimen (2 each)    Selenite specimen (1 each)

# Pipsico Field Trip

Pipsico Boy Scout Reservation  
57 Pipsico Road, Spring Grove, VA 23881  
June 5 & 6

The Pipsico Boy Scout Reservation is an amazing place that is almost 100 acres of wilderness teeming with wildlife and fossils. It is a gem located in back yard of Hampton, approximately 65 to 70 miles from Tidewater.

This dig is always sponsored by the Mountain Area Gem & Mineral Association (MAGMA) & the Boy Scouts. The site host is again Mr. Bill Stine.



The check in time Saturday morning at 8:00 AM at the waterfront structure. Due to rising insurance costs, the dig fee is \$10.00 cash per person. However, if you show Mr. Stine your active 2021 TGMS membership card your dig fee will be reduced to \$5.00 cash. There are still cabinettes available at a cost of \$20.00 cash for the weekend. If you are staying in a cabinette, you can arrive anytime afternoon on the 4<sup>th</sup> ... please make sure to check in with the Ranger. The closest cabinettes to the dig site are located across from the handicraft building. Cabinettes are first come, first serve basis and cooking is not allowed inside. All overnight participants must be off the site no later than noon on Sunday June 6<sup>th</sup>.

Due to the many large storms this year that compromised the roads, vehicles will not be allowed on the road to the waterfront structure. The closest parking area will be near the handicraft building. So I recommend you bring a cart to aid in the hike to and from the waterfront. The trek to the waterfront is over a hill and about a quarter of a mile in each direction. The large storms this year also caused several massive landslides onto the beach. In fact, several of the slides reach into the water... to get around them you will have to get wet! So plan accordingly.

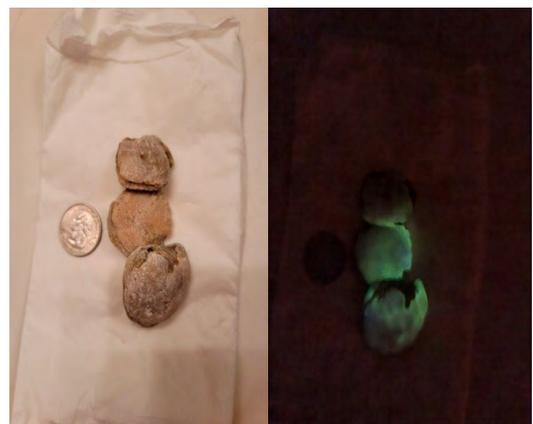
Once you get to the beach the “digging” is pretty easy because it is very sandy soil. One need only stroll along the beach and you will find a plethora of shells, fossils and drift wood. This is a perfect field trip for beginners of all ages! Below are a few items I found at the last Pipsico field trip. If you have any questions you can call me, Kelley Finch at 757-630-6607, leave a message and I will call you back.



Ecphora Quadricostata - an extinct predatory marine snail - gastropod that is found from Virginia to Florida in the Pliocene strata.



Chesapeake Jeffersonian – a scallop that is the official Virginia State fossil. They range in size from small to dinner plate size - both doubles and very nice single shells.



Calcite Clams – these fluoresce under a longwave black light and some are phosphorescent (glow for a short time after the light is off).

# Brad's Bench Tips

by Brad Smith

## SEPARATING DISCS

Separating Discs (also called Cutoff Wheels) are inexpensive and do a great job cutting or shaping steel. You can use them to sharpen tool points, cut piano wire to length, make slots, and sharpen worn drills. Other uses include modifying pliers and making your own design stamps.

My preference is the one inch diameter size. Be sure to hold the wheel firmly so nothing moves to break the disc, and definitely wear your safety glasses. Those are little flakes of steel coming off the disk.

BTW - Separating Discs are rather poor at soft metals like copper, silver and gold. Soft metals clog up the cutting edges.



Smart Solutions for Your Jewelry  
Making Problems  
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## DEBURRING JUMP RINGS

When cutting jump rings from large gauge wire for chain making, you'll notice the saw leaves a small burr. An easy way to remove these is to tumble the rings with some fine-cut pyramids. It's best not to tumble for a long period with the pyramids because it will remove the polished finish from the wire.

No tumbler, no problem. You don't actually need a tumbler. I just put a handful of pyramids in a wide mouth plastic jar and shake for a bit. You can find these pyramids in the tumble finishing section of most jewelry supply catalogs.



## CORNY JOKE

What rock group has four men that don't sing?



Answer on back page.

# PROJECT OF THE MONTH

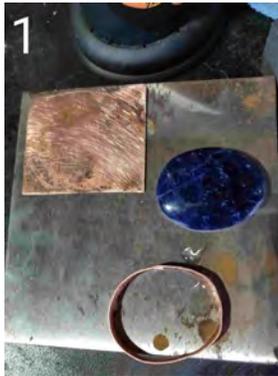
Contributed By TGMS Member Jeff Sandmeir

First: some disclaimers. I'm self-taught from internet videos, so please excuse the obvious issues. This is also the first bezel I've completed, and I've re-used some pieces (notably the backplate). Lastly, all photos are taken with my cell phone, so apologies for the quality.

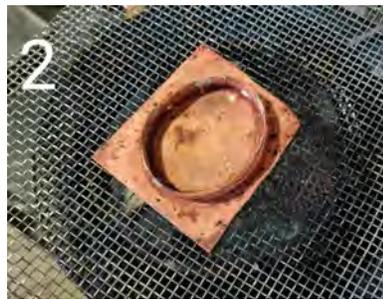
I've been wanting to make my own bezels for a while, but due to my work schedule and lack of funds, I've not been able to attend formal classes or other training. So, I started looking online for tips, training, and how-to videos. There are a lot for working in silver and other precious metals, but very little for working in base metals like copper.

Not having the funds to waste on silver, at least in the initial learning stages, I tried applying the information about silver soldering to copper. This project is the result.

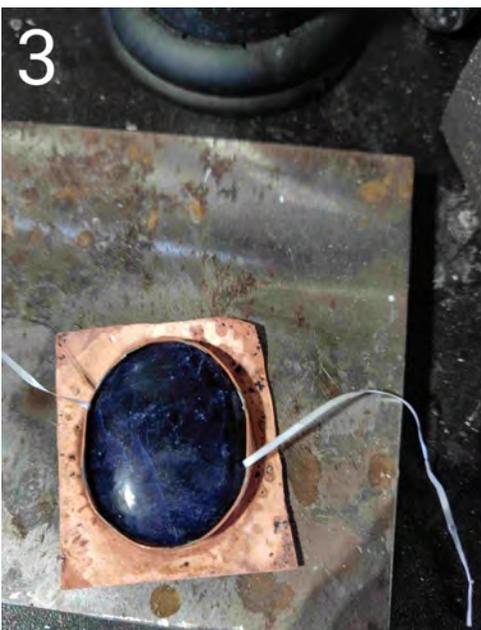
For anyone wanting to start out this way, there are a few missteps and mistakes I'll warn you of. Most importantly, and probably obvious to others, plumbing solder and plumbing flux do not work for jewelry. Also, the type of torch is important. Soldering irons and small butane torches for electronics are not powerful enough. Unless you're very skilled with it to begin with, oxy-acetylene rigs are too powerful. Even some of the butane torches available are too powerful and can melt copper before you realize. Now on to my project.



This picture shows my basic starting pieces, the bezel I made, a piece of copper for backing, and the cabochon I'll be setting. I didn't take pictures of the bezel making process, sorry.



This is the backing plate with bezel attached. I used medium-hard solder to attach it, then realized I had gaps. I went back with copper-phosphate solder to fill in the gaps. You can see where some of the solder crept up the side of the bezel.



Important step, and a trick I found online. Check the fit of the stone, and use a bit of dental floss under the stone just in case the fit is a little tight.

At this point, I've attached the bail (a piece of thick copper wire I practiced soldering on before). Also cut the excess copper off the base with a jeweler's saw. A & B are a couple different views of the same stage.



## PROJECT OF THE MONTH (Continued)

Starting to set the stone using burnishers. Still a little wrinkled around the edges. Again, below are different views.



Finished setting, still not perfect. Still need more practice using the burnishers.



Polished up using a rotary tool and felt wheels, with a little polishing compound. A, B, and C are other views.



You can see on the back a little bit of leftover solder from previous practice runs.

It's not perfect, but I enjoyed making it. Hope you all enjoyed the journey with me. - Jeff



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**About This Publication**

**The Tidewater Prospector** is the monthly newsletter of the Tidewater Gem and Mineral Society, Virginia Beach, Virginia, associated with the Eastern Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. and the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Permission to copy freely granted when proper credit given to both the publication and the author.

**The Tidewater Gem and Mineral Society** is a non-profit organization devoted to the collecting and study of minerals, gemstones, geology, paleontology and the lapidary arts as well as the love and deep appreciation of the great outdoors.

**Meetings** are the third Friday of each month at 7:30 PM at Memorial United Methodist Church located at 804 Gammon Road, Virginia Beach, VA Our monthly meetings are open to everyone, no admission is charged.

**Website:** <http://tgms.weebly.com/>  
 Please contact Brooks Britt with any photos that you would like to add to our site. Email him at: [bbritt@verizon.net](mailto:bbritt@verizon.net) You can also view this newsletter on the site.

Email [hyszczak@cox.net](mailto:hyszczak@cox.net) to submit articles to the newsletter editor. Deadline is third of the month for material for the newsletter - but the sooner, the better!

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com> Login to FB, then go to Groups and in the search box, type in "Tidewater Gem & Mineral Society", The page is open to view by anyone. Click "join" to join the group to add photos of your own and to post information. Brooks administrates the site and will get back with you.



**Corny Joke Answer:**

Mount Rushmore!

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Our meeting in May is on Friday the 21st at 7:30 pm at Memorial United Methodist Church, 804 Gammon Road, Virginia Beach, VA. (Gammon Road is off of Indian River Road, in between Military Highway and Providence Road)

