

# Tar Heel Tailings

## Special Interest Articles:

- Prez Sez
- “Empress Of Uruguay”, World’s Largest Amethyst Geode
- The Mineral Amethyst

## Individual Highlights:

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A newsletter for Gem and Mineral enthusiast in and around the Raleigh, North Carolina area.

## Prez Sez By Linda Searcy

Seward Shaddock has volunteered to provide food (chili or spaghetti?) for the meeting but we need someone to provide drinks. Please contact me if you want to volunteer for the drinks.

This month Tom Todaro will give his presentation on mineral collecting safety. Along with the knowledge he has gained during the past several years, he has taken several safety programs.

The Show volunteer sheets for each club area (Hospitality, Refreshments,

Continued on Page 4



## “Empress of Uruguay”, world’s largest amethyst geode

The giant geode originally from Uruguay was shipped to Australia through Brazil in 2007

The 2.5 tons Empress of Uruguay is slightly less impressive after a tourist pinched a piece of the world’s largest amethyst on show in Queensland, Australia.

The three-meter tall amethyst geode - a hollow rock filled with amethyst crystals - is the main attraction at the Crystal Caves at Atherton, southwest of Cairns. But it’s now missing a bit after a tourist broke off a chunk of crystals the size of a tennis ball in a brazen act of theft and vandalism.

“It’s like slashing the Mona Lisa but worse because the Empress is

one of nature’s grand masterpieces,” owner Rene Boissevain said on Tuesday.

It’s believed the culprit used some sort of tool to remove the crystals. Staff discovered the theft yesterday.

Mr Boissevain said the

Empress of Uruguay was worth hundreds of thousands of dollars and the damage would reduce its value. CCTV footage has been handed to local police but Mr Boissevain hopes the person, or people, responsible will own up and return the crystals.

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**Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.**

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**We're on the Web!**

See us at:

[www.tarheelclub.org](http://www.tarheelclub.org)

**Program & Refreshments**

REFRESHMENT SCHEDULE:

Coordinator: Open

February TBD

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

February	Tom Todaro – safety
March	Grab Bags, volunteer signups
April	Potluck and Show discussion
May	TBD
June	TBD
July	TBD
August	Ice Cream Social
September	TBD
October	Officer Nominations, Grab Bags
November	Elections

Remember, the club will reimburse you for up to \$85 (bring your receipts to the treasurer).

**February Treasurer's Report**

Dec. Ending /	
Jan. Beginning Balance	\$14,547.74
-----	
Deposits (+)	
Dealers	\$2,120.00
Members	\$725.00
Other	\$25.00
-----	
Sub total	\$2,870.00
-----	
Checks Written (-)	
NC State Fair Deposit	\$2,200.00
PO Box Rental/1 year	250.00
Newsletter	105.75
Dues Southeast Fed.	246.00
Show expense rocks	110.78
Meeting Food	75.00
Hotel Deposit/Judging Show	2500.00
Postage: mailings/dealers	19.60
-----	
Sub Total	\$5,507.13
-----	
Jan. Ending /	
Feb. Beginning Balance	\$11,910.61

**February B-Day Members**

- Danielle Cozart
- Greg Dillon
- Tom Gallian
- Becky Hill
- James Jin
- Jim Jones
- Susan Korn
- Victor Krynicki
- Nancy Lappenbusch
- Fletcher MacDonald
- Susan Montana
- Richard Murray
- Richard Turcotte



Membership applications may be mailed to:

Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club, Inc.  
Attention: Treasurer  
10609 Chelsea Drive  
Raleigh, NC 27603

## Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc. - January Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 16th, 2018

Attendees = ??

### Opening of Club Meeting:

Linda opened the meeting and introduced new officers.

### Program: Auction

Discussion of Club business

### Old Business:

Cindy introduced needs we have for the club show in April; grab bags, need help with ice, drinks, silent auction. Melissa Whitfield agreed to be backup chair for silent auction if Jack Fried does not. Gerald Beck will be cook...John Heinz will be "heavy lifter."

Sample shirt was displayed for club feedback.

It is a tan polo to offset embroidered emerald. Choice was presented of serif or sans-serif font with emerald in different shades of green. Option to have female sizes as well. Female sizes will be same price, \$25. Sizes above XL will be extra charge.

Trip coordinator is needed to call quarries and find out requirements such as hard hats, then communicate to Mary Harrison. Catelyn volunteered to learn this position.

Refreshments coordinator needed to find out who will bring refreshments, or brings them if no one else does. No volunteers for this position.

### New Business:

Suggestions for Monthly presenters...

- Dr. Chris Tackerd - May June or July?
- Someone to present their personal collection, speak about old mines. Speaker would be reimbursed for gas.
- Teacher from Robeson County Community College who runs youth program in STEM analyzing meteorites. Possibility of Gem Club providing a scholarship for student to go to program and come back and give presentation
- Speaker Karen from past year to speak again about meteorites.
- Have someone speak about volcanoes.
- Have speaker talk about what are the "hot new places" to go, or trip reports.

Additional suggestion for us to make up fliers about our meetings/show in Pete's Rock shop at Fairgrounds.

Club Website may need updating.

- Club software can range from building from scratch to more canned options like "Meet Up"...focus on online payments (may be extra charge, Stripe, PayPal, or Square are options), database of members (option to enter only once).
- Suggestion to update address of meeting site on website to street address rather than building so that GPS can be used by new members.
- Suggestion was made to have all club loaner equipment listed on website.

Suggestions for membership application form:

- Adding checkbox for junior members?
- Official age of junior member is 17 or under—website needs to be changed to reflect this.
- Decision to have different email addresses for each member on the same form, but only one mailing address.

Club Library was discussed:

- Melissa will make inventory of which books we have.

- Members suggested they would like library cart of books, so we can roll them out for meetings.
- Kindle account was discussed, Bob suggested kindle account may be limited to one member or a few members.

Do we want multiple Square email accounts? Club decided yes.

Do we want 3 new Square chip readers (\$50 each)? Club voted yes.

Bob's report on loaner equipment and lapidary lab:

- We got a new bearing for our Facetron machine for the cost of shipping from the company.
- Loaner microscope is available for examining rough or micro mounts (5 more). Other items available are 5 faceting machines.
- Rules for lapidary lab at Craft Center: Club members must sign out the club boxes of lapidary supplies. Club members do not need to buy studio pass, but must be qualified to use machines.
- Will club buy capping machine for loaner program? (What is the price? Perhaps find a used one? Maybe a Pixie? \$500 price limit)

Melissa proposed setting up a Live Video stream of the Geode Booth? Club decided yes, conditional of how we set it up.

New member has 17 years of Gem magazines free for members.

### Refreshments:

Thanks for the great refreshments!

### Door Prize:

Winner: Suzanne Love, who also shared her birthday story of how her love of jewelry making brought her to the club!



### Close of Meeting:

Meeting closed at 9:30

Respectfully Submitted

Lindsey Bradsher,

Secretary, Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc.

## Prez Sez

Continued from Page 1

, Geode, Silent Auction and Demonstration) will be available at the February and March meetings. Sign up or contact the activity chairperson.

Reminder: check your rock and specimen stash to bring to the March meeting when we will be packing Grab bags. We will have a large rock donation (from Amy Ledford who collected it on her geological expedition in Nevada) that we may consider for Silent Auction, grab bags, etc.

We have several program spots to fill - perhaps have Dr. Chris Tacker for a return presentation or a couple of speakers for junior rockhound opportunities? Becka Powers with a Clayton elementary school is reaching out to us to partner with them as consultants "Rock units are taught in the different grades and the idea to let the kids plot and search for their items will make it a great learning experience for all concerned".

- February – Tom Todaro – safety
- March – Grab Bags, volunteer signups
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- May - TBD
- June - TBD
- July - TBD
- August – Ice Cream Social
- September - TBD
- October – Officer Nominations, Grab Bags
- November – Elections
- December – no meeting

Thank you,  
Linda Searcy  
President  
Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc.

## “Empress of Uruguay”, world’s largest amethyst geode vandalized

Continued from Page 1

Crystal Caves manager Jim Russell said it was the first time the Empress had been vandalized in more than three years since it went on display. He said security would have to be upgraded to protect it from any similar acts.

Originally from the north of Uruguay, the 3.27 meters tall Empress arrived at The Crystal Caves in November 2007 and two large cranes were needed to lift her into her current position.

The Empress had a special crate constructed tightly around her, at the mine in Uruguay, and this was then secured in her own steel container and shipped out of Brazil to Brisbane, Australia.

Following the 1600km road trip to Cairns, huge cranes were used to remove her from the container and to gently

place here in her current position. The “Empress Room” was then built around her.

According to the Boissevain they paid 75.000 dollars for the Empress in late 2007, and at least another 25.000 to have her shipped to Cairns. Apparently her market price is now over 250.000 Australian dollars, but she is not for sale.

When she was first found in that mine in Uruguay, she was first offered to our founder and still current owners, René and Nelleke Boissevain, because the Boissevains are long standing customers of this particular mine.

<http://en.mercopress.com/2011/08/02/empress-of-uruguay-world-s-largest-amethyst-geode-vandalized>

## THE MINERAL AMETHYST

Amethyst is a well known mineral and gemstone. It is the purple variety of the mineral Quartz, and its most valuable and prized variety. Its name derives from the Greek "amethystos", which means "not drunken", as Amethyst in antiquity was thought to ward off drunkenness. The color of some Amethyst specimens from certain localities slowly fade upon prolonged exposure to light. When used as a gemstone, Amethyst is often heat treated to deepen the color, or to transform it into Citrine. Some varieties may also change to a light green color, which is given the trade name "Prasiolite", or "Green Amethyst", as it is more commonly known in the gem trade.

Amethyst is most prevalent as small stubby pyramidal crystals, although several localities such as the Mexican occurrences are well-known for producing elegantly tall prismatic crystals, which are

very highly regarded by collectors. Amethyst also forms the internal lining of geodes, some of which can be over 10 feet tall and weighing several tons.

### VARIETIES

Amethyst Quartz

- Mixture of Amethyst and Milky Quartz (or clear Quartz). It is purple on top and white or clear on the bottom. It may also be banded purple and white.

Ametrine

- Mixture of Amethyst and Citrine. It is partially purple and partially yellow or orange, with the color zones often sharply divided. More information can be found on the Ametrine gemstone page.



Cactus Quartz

- Form of Quartz, usually Amethyst, Citrine, or a combination of the two, that contains a large crystal or crystals overgrown with a layer of spiky smaller crystals. Cactus Quartz is specific to Boekenhouthoek (Magaliesberg) in South Africa.



## Canadian Amethyst

- Amethyst with an internal coating of red Hematite under the crystal surface, found near Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada.

## Lavender Amethyst

- Pale purple variety of Amethyst.

## Veracruz Amethyst

- Tall, prismatic Amethyst crystals from Vera Cruz, Mexico.

**USES**

Amethyst is one of the most popular gems. It has a beautiful color and is fairly common, making it an inexpensive and widely used gem. Most Amethyst is faceted into jewelry cuts, and some are cut as cabochons. Large, massive chunks of Amethyst banded with Quartz is sometimes carved into ornaments.

Amethyst is also very popular among mineral collectors. Small geode sections and tumbled stones are sold to amateur collectors, while more serious collectors go for the rare prismatic crystals and giant geode sections.

**NOTEWORTHY LOCALITIES**

Amethyst is a very common mineral and is found worldwide. Only a select few of the most famous localities will be mentioned here.

Tall, prismatic, well-shaped crystals are restricted to several Mexican localities: Piedras Parado and Las Vigas de Ramirez, both in Veracruz; and Amatitlan, in Guerro. They occur in elongated crystals that are rarely faceted, since collectors pay well for these rarities. Another excellent Mexican locality is Guanajuato, where plates of stubby crystals are found.

Enormous quantities of Amethyst come from Minas Gerais, Brazil, which contains the famous Rio Grande do Sul, where huge crystal-

lined Amethyst geodes are found, especially in Ametista do Sul. Another South American country, Uruguay, produces deeply colored crystals in large geodes and pipes in Artigas, near the Brazilian border. Another good South American locality, which is especially noted for Ametrine, is the Anahi Mine, Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

Large amounts of Amethyst are found both in Namibia and South Africa -- these are often labeled in the jewelry industry as "African Amethyst". In Namibia, an interesting occurrence is the Goboboseb Mountains, near Brandberg, in the Erongo Mountains, where crystals are zoned in lighter to darker colors. In South Africa, extensive deposits are in Boekenhouthoek (Magaliesberg), Mkokoboti district, where the Amethyst occurs with a spiky overgrowth of small crystals (popularly called "Cactus Quartz"). Very dark and clear Amethyst was once found in Russia in the Ural Mountains and Siberia; and a drusy, lilac-colored Amethyst in globular associations has recently come from Nyiri, in northeastern Hungary.

There are two notable Canadian occurrences. One is Thunder Bay, Ontario, where specimens contain an internal coating of red Hematite. The other locality is the area of Digby, Nova Scotia, where naturally rounded, waterworn Amethyst pebbles are found on the beaches along the Bay of Fundy.

In the U.S., fine Amethyst crystals come from the Four Peaks (in the Mazatzal Mountains), Gila Co., Arizona; in the Pohndorf Mine, Jefferson Co., Montana; Crystal Park, Beaverhead Co., Montana; the Penoyer Mine at Redfeather Lakes, Larimer Co., Colorado; and at Deer Hill, Oxford Co., Maine. There are several good localities in the Carolinas, specifically Statesville, Iredell Co., North Carolina; the Reel Mine, Iron Station, Lincoln Co., North Carolina; and Abbeville Co., South Carolina (the Diamond Hill Quartz Mine and the Ellis Jones Mine). A recently productive location producing deep purple crystals is Jackson's Crossroads, Wilkes Co., Georgia. Diamond Hill in Ashaway, Hopkinton, Washington Co., Rhode Island is known for the rare scepters that were found there. Amethyst is also found in the traprock quarries of Passaic Co., New Jersey, specifically at the Upper New Street Quarry in Paterson and at Prospect Park.

<b><u>Chemical Formula</u></b>	SiO <sub>2</sub>
<b><u>Composition</u></b>	Silicon dioxide. Its purple coloring is usually caused by <a href="#">impurities</a> of iron or manganese <a href="#">compounds</a> .
<b><u>Color</u></b>	Light to dark purple. Sometimes <a href="#">banding</a> with purple and whitish lines. May also be mixed together with <a href="#">Citrine</a> .
<b><u>Streak</u></b>	White
<b><u>Hardness</u></b>	7
<b><u>Crystal System</u></b>	<a href="#">Hexagonal</a>

**3D Crystal Atlas**  
(Click for animated model)



**Crystal Forms and Aggregates**

Most often as protruding clusters of pyramids on a [matrix](#) base. These "pyramids" can be quite large. Also occurs as tall [prismatic](#) crystals, as short [stubby](#) crystals, in [drusy](#) aggregates, [massive](#), in [geodes](#), and as rounded waterworn stones. A very interesting habit is as [crystalline](#) crusts inside volcanic [pipes](#). Crystals are usually [striated](#) horizontally, and occasionally have a [scepter growth](#).

**Transparency**

Transparent to translucent

**Specific Gravity**

2.6 - 2.7

**Luster**

[Vitreous](#)

**Cleavage**

Indiscernible

**Fracture**

[Conchoidal](#)

**Tenacity**

[Brittle](#)

**Other ID Marks**

Occasionally [fluorescent](#) cream or white in [shortwave ultraviolet light](#).

**Complex Tests**

Dissolves in [hydrofluoric acid](#).

**In Group**

[Silicates](#); [Tectosilicates](#); [Silica Group](#)

**Striking Features**

Color, crystal habits, and hardness.

**Environment**

Occurs in all mineral [environments](#), especially in [igneous](#) environments.

**Rock Type**

[Igneous](#), [Sedimentary](#), [Metamorphic](#)

**COMMON MINERAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Other types of Quartz, especially Agate, Calcite, Hematite, Celadonite

**DISTINGUISHING SIMILAR MINERALS**

Fluorite - Much softer (4) and occurs in different crystal forms.

Apatite - Softer (5), rarely in pyramidal crystals.

Spinel - Occurs in different crystals, harder (7½ - 8).

<http://www.minerals.net/mineral/amethyst.aspx>

## UPCOMING SHOWS

**April 6 - 8, 2018: Raleigh, NC** – 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Capital Area Gem & Mineral Show. Tar Heel Gem and Mineral Club, Inc. Kerr Scott Building, NC State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, NC. The show is sponsored by the Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club and includes 29 dealers. The Hospitality area sells grab bags with mineral specimens. Buy a rock at the Geode booth and be the first to see what is inside. The on-going Silent Auction has new items every hour. Dealers provide minerals, fossils, finished jewelry, gemstones, findings and beads for sale.. Hours: Fri 3-8; Sat 10-6; Sun 10-5. Admission: Free and Free Parking. Contact: Cyndy Hummel; 919-779-6220; [mchummel@mindspring.com](mailto:mchummel@mindspring.com); [www.tarheelclub.org](http://www.tarheelclub.org);

**March 9–11, 2018: Augusta, GA** - 30th Annual Aiken-Augusta Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show. Sponsored by the nonprofit organizations: Aiken Gem, Mineral & Fossil Society; Augusta Gem and Mineral Society. Julian Smith Casino, 2200 Broad St. Augusta, GA. Diamonds, sapphires, tanzanites, emeralds and other fine jewelry. Gorgeous everyday jewelry, mineral lamps, art objects, and beads. Fabulous fossils and minerals from around the world. Jewelry making and cabochon cutting demos. Kid's Treasure Dig, Grab Bags, Geode cutting, Member case displays, Educational resources. FREE "Adopt-a-Rock" to every child. Hours: Fri & Sat 10–6 / Sun 10–5. Concessions benefit Relay for Life. Admission: Kids under 12 FREE with one Adult admission: \$3/day or \$5 weekend pass; 50¢-off admission coupon on our websites. Contact: Show Chair: Chris Glass 706-284-9239; <http://www.aikengmfs.org>; <http://agams.club>

## Vugsites

The following are some links to Web-Sites that may interest some of our members:

<http://www.tarheelclub.org> / <https://www.facebook.com/tarheelgemandmineralclub/> These are the official sites for the Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club. I would strongly urge all members to check them out on a regular basis.

<http://www.amfed.org> / <http://www.amfed.org/sfms> These are the official sites for the organizing body that the Tar Heel Gem & Mineral Club is founded under. I would strongly urge all members to check them out on a regular basis.

[http://www.amfed.org/sfms/lodestar\\_newsletter.html](http://www.amfed.org/sfms/lodestar_newsletter.html) The SFMS Lodestar Newsletter

<http://www.carolinageologicalsociety.org/CGS/Home.html> This site provides numerous downloadable field-trip guide books, maps, and charts of the Carolinas. It will prove to keep any avid rock hound busy for years. Great Site!

[http://www.ncminerals.com/ncmineralswebsite\\_files/page0011.htm](http://www.ncminerals.com/ncmineralswebsite_files/page0011.htm) And while we are on the subject, try this link. Its titled: Links of Interest to Rock hounds in NC. It will take you to a list of links for North Carolina gems and minerals.

<http://www.rocksforkids.com/> Just like the name says, a nice place to steer the younger members.

Information & photographs of over 6300 specimens from the Glenn & Martha Vargas Gem & Mineral Collection.

<http://www.rockhoundlounge.com> Scott Laborde, a club member maintains his own web site that might be of interest to people collecting in and around Wake County.

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/29726500/ns/technology\\_and\\_science-science](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/29726500/ns/technology_and_science-science) This site highlights a half dozen of the most recent significant fossil finds.

<http://appmodo.com/13971/mole-quest-for-the-terracore-gem-app-review-for-the-iphone-and-ipod-touch/> If you have an iphone or an ipod touch, this rock-hounding may be the game for you.

[http://diamonddanpublications.net/index\\_files/page0009.html](http://diamonddanpublications.net/index_files/page0009.html) Diamond Dan's Mini Miner's Monthly

I would like to encourage all members of the THG&MC that maintain their own presence on the internet to send me a link to their site to be published in future Vugsites so that other club members may learn and enjoy the craft, the art, the interests that many of us have in common.

Park in the Cates Ave. Parking Deck off Jensen Dr. Enter Thompson Building directly across from the parking lot.

## Our Next Meeting is

**February 20, 2018 @ 7:30PM**

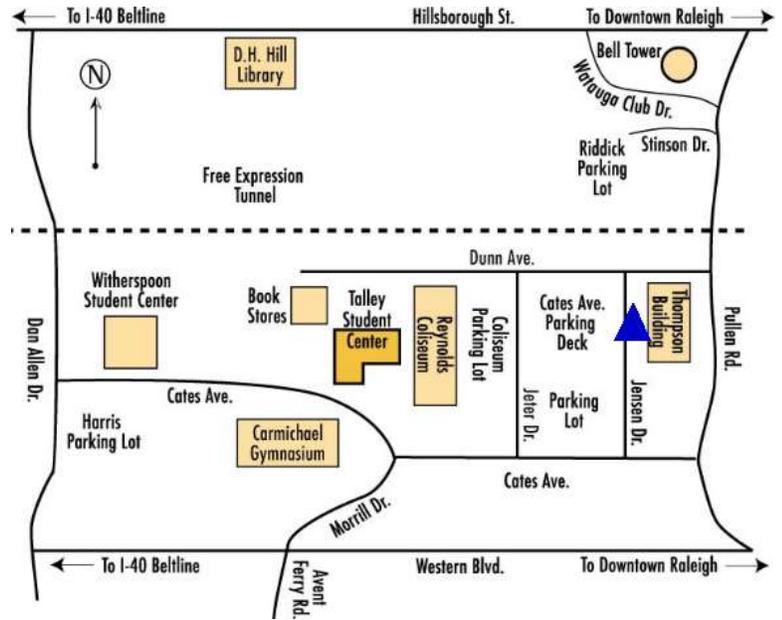
## NC State Crafts Center

**210 Jensen Dr, Raleigh, NC 27606**

### *About Our Organization...*

The Tar Heel Gem and mineralogy, paleontology, Mineral Club, Inc. was earth sciences, and formed in 1974 as a lapidary techniques, nonprofit educational organization for people among the general public. The club pursues these goals through publications, meetings, lectures, field trips, exhibits, demonstrations, and other activities.

**Come and be a part of the Fun!**



**TAR HEEL GEM & MINERAL CLUB**  
 10609 Chelsea Drive  
 Raleigh, NC 27603

