



Snow Fell on the Pine Trees for Winter. CC0 1.0. Photo by StayWeird.



February 2026

The Rocky Mountain Federation News



The official publication of the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. The RMFMS is a regional member of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. Email receipt of the *RMF News* is a privilege of membership in the RMFMS, and it cannot be exchanged by the editor for individual club newsletters from other regional federations. Accessible to the public on www.rmfmts.org.

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Information for the **March** issue is due to
LJGRALG@aol.com by **February 15**.

President's Message

Jim Gray, RMFMS President

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



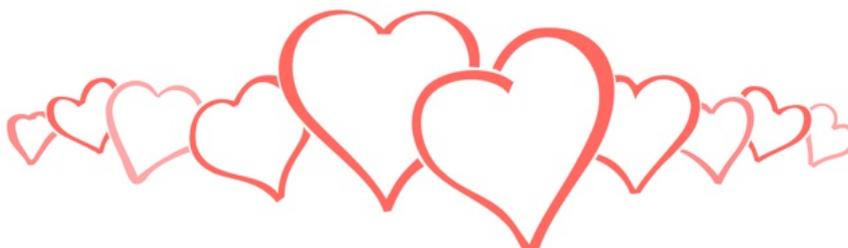
The big shows in Arizona are well underway. I hope to be able to go down to Quartzsite and Tucson this year.

As we begin this new year, the RMFMS still needs some committees filled. Please look at yourselves and your fellow club members for people who would like to help. It is very rewarding and one can meet a lot of knowledgeable people. I am looking forward to being able to attend Club show throughout the Federation. The AFMS convention will be in St. Charles, IL in May, the 23rd and 24th. The annual RMFMS convention will be July 9-12, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The conventions are fun and opportunities to share ideas with fellow rock people.

Please consider being on one of the committees that have openings:

- PLAC – AZ
- PLAC – CO
- PLAC – NM/TX
- PLAC – OK/AR
- PLAC – UT/NV
- Lapidary Tech
- Resolutions
- Supplies – Roberta Wagle, the current chairperson, would like to be replaced.

Until next time,
 Jim



Happy Valentine's Day!

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Treasurer's Report

Gene Maggard, RMFMS Treasurer

Here at mid- January there are still 14 clubs that either have not turned in their annual report or have not paid their dues. A typical year. It is hard getting the last 15 or 20 clubs to report and pay their dues. I have contacted all clubs and have gotten a positive response that they will be renewing their membership. One club, the Coconino Lapidary Club, disbanded in 2025. Nobody wanted to be an officer.



Of the clubs that have reported and paid their dues, we have 12,308 members. This compares to 14,495 members in 2024-25, so I think that we are on track to maintaining our total membership or perhaps growing a little. 2025-26 reports should be complete by the time it is time to write the March article.

Public Relations for RMFMS

DeLane Cox, RMFMS Public Relations Chair



How is the New Year working out for your Club? New Officers elected and on-the-job? Got the Budget done and approved? Have a working plan for programs to be presented? Plans made to teach classes for your members' further enlightenment? Show plans

are underway? Publicity is going well?

Oh, let's back up, here. Publicity is....well, the club should have a publicity plan for the year, too.

And the Plan is not just publicity for the Show or the Swap. It is information first of all to your primary body, your members. Members are the life-blood of your club: do not keep them in the dark about what the club is doing. Members should always be invited to attend your Executive Committee/Board of Directors/Ruling Body of the Club meetings. There may not be many who come, but those who do will know what their club is all about! And they are much more likely to volunteer to take on a job with the club, or help out where needed.

Does the club have a newsletter that goes to all members? Do members receive emails or other

forms of communication regularly in order to keep them up-to-date on the what, when and where of the club's activities? And do the club members get updates that CONTAIN AN INVITATION TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP with club events? Talking to the members who show up at meetings (which may be a very small percentage of total membership) will not get the best number of helpers for events.

Another key area is getting your information out to the General Public. After all this is where NEW MEMBERS are likely to come from. And what club does not need new members?

How do you get information out to the public? Most of the time clubs rely on news media. Yes, these outlets are getting smaller and more self-contained with their output. But many still try to have local color in their programming, and it would be good to seek these out and see about getting your club some coverage. But, remember, you must have something worthy of the coverage....a member who has done something special, an event the club can invite the public to attend, the club's 100th birthday....there is always something to publicize. And pictures and/or videos can go a long way with the television stations!

continued on page 4

Public Relations — continued from page 3

The third key area for your information will be your community. This is NOT the same as the above “general public.” This includes elected officials, governing bodies, historical societies. Government, you ask? Well, you are probably governed by one or two of these entities. City, county, or state government makes rules that must be followed. Or need to be altered to fit the rockhounds needs, such as participating with the Federal Government when rules are changed in public lands that would limit or exclude rock collecting. If they have your club name, and are familiar with your group, there is always the possibility of being asked to help put new rules and programs together that cover a rockhounds interests.

And there has not even been a mention of “social media” yet. Here is a wide-open, wonderful

method of getting information out. Club members tend to have a wide variety of social media sites they visit regularly. Ask them to put something out, and see just how far it goes.

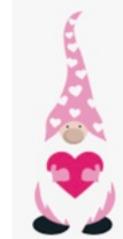
Special note: be sure everything you send out is correct, has your club name and address, and meeting time and location. Most of all, there must be a contact person for more or follow-up information.

Ready now? Then, get moving and get your public relations program really going! And if you need help, or need to ask questions, that is what this position is for: contact DeLane Cox, RMFMS Public Relations Committee Chair, <delanec3 at earthlink.net>, and I will try to help.

Oh, The Words

Melody Ulanowski, Ada Gem, Mineral & Fossil Club

I recently saw a petition to make a National Day for the silent letters in our language. **February 8 has been suggested as Silent Letter Day. A day when we all can exchange gnomes in celebration of all the letters used in words for absolutely no reason.** Credit this suggestion to comedian Michael McIntyre whose YouTube video is hilarious. After viewing the video, I decided to look into this phenomenon.



So, on a seriously wordy note, roughly 60% of English words have silent letters. From useless e’s and extra s’s at the ends of words, the d’s that stand tall in words like ledge or edge that are seen but not spoken. There are useless b’s in lots of words — think dumb, comb or debt — makes you want to doubt that the language is sensible at all. As for all those useless p’s that are at the start of words like psalm and psychiatry, those can boggle a speaker’s psyche! And don’t even look at the p’s that combine with h’s to form the sound of a totally different letter. What?? Hold the phone!

With an estimate of almost 2 million total words in use and 60% of those having silent letters, we are looking at celebrating 1,200,000 words. That’s a lot to celebrate, and I am all for securing a collection of gnomes to celebrate this day.

Wether by desin or just foolishness, the English tongue (why isn’t that spelled tung?) is complicated. I don’t have any ansers to questions about that. So, I am asking you to think about the unused leters in words when you neel down to pik up that agat or ston or rok or silomelane from the lege for yor colection, and I hope we don’t see any terodactyls in the sky.

RMFMS Editor Note: Hooray for silent letters! There are actually pronunciation rules for at least some of these! I thought this was hilarious!

From A View from the Arbucks, December 2025

AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year Honorees (ACROY)

Chris Whitney-Smith, RMFMS ACROY Chair

Quotes from Judi Allison, AFMS RoY Chair:

“Every club has at least one. Some clubs may have many. Those may be the folks who are almost always at the meetings. Perhaps they quietly help clean up the room. Or maybe they are the ones who regularly bring items for show and tell, or provide treats, or quietly help others learn about some aspect of the hobby. They are the folks who help keep our hobby going even if they are not the ones who are in the ‘limelight.’

We can honor these folks in such a simple manner. That is what I believe the **“American Rockhound of the Year Award”** is all about. **This award is not a contest.** The only requirement is that someone in your club takes the initiative to pass on the information to the right people. Some clubs have committees to choose a person, some have the Executive Committee do the choosing, or possibly, the previous recipient makes the choice. The point is that the process is not set in stone with strict guidelines. The idea is to honor someone in your club who may have gone unnoticed in what they have done for the club during the year. Please don’t overlook the quiet majority.

If you haven’t taken the time to choose one of your unsung heroes to honor as your AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year, now is the time.

Remember, it is a simple process:

- choose the person
- write a few sentences why you believe the person should receive the honor

- submit the information to your Regional American Club Rockhound of the Year Chairperson.”
- Our **RMFMS ACROY Chair is Chris Whitney-Smith, ask.chrisws@yahoo.com**

[Editor’s note: We love to publish photos if you don’t mind sending!]

Mineralogical Society of Arizona 2025 Rockhound of the Year is awarded to **Bill Freese** in recognition of his volunteerism to Mineralogical Society of Arizona (MSA). His numerous hours of service on



Field Trip Committee and as a Trip Leader is second to none. His tireless contributions coordinating field trip opportunities for MSA as well as numerous

clubs state-wide is legendary and truly inspiring. Congratulations on your well-deserved selection as 2025 Rockhound of the Year as voted by general membership! Presented by MSA President Chris Whitney-Smith.



Where in the RMFMS is Rocky?

- Arizona?
- Kansas?
- Utah?

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Photo left, 1896 Bridge somewhere in RMFMS.
Public Domain



Answers on page 15.

AFMS Endowment Fund

Richard Jaeger, RMFMS Chair



Basically, this is a raffle drawing with tickets being sold at \$5 each or five tickets for \$20. The drawing will be held at the MWF/AFMS Convention in St. Charles, Illinois on May 23-24, 2026. People from around the American Federation donate

prizes for the raffle – they may be jewelry, crystals, minerals, fossils, books, or other items, the value of which range generally from \$75 to \$200. The drawing is handled so that there is at least one winner from each of the seven regional federations; last year we had two winners from the Rocky Mountain Federation.

As items are donated, pictures of them will appear in the AFMS Newsletter and on the American Federation Website <www.amfed.org>. There are generally around 30 items.

This is a major way to financially support the American Federation's efforts on behalf of our hobby. Currently the funds go towards the Junior Rockhound Program, Judges Training, and preparing Programs for distribution to Regional Federations, which can be used by individual clubs. Over \$5,000 was raised last year. Cheryl requests that the checks be sent to the regional chairs so that we may issue tickets and have a record of who has entered. **Checks should be made payable to the "AFMS Endowment Fund."** We then forward those checks to Mary Ann Ferguson-Rich, the AFMS Treasurer. I will fill out the proper number of tickets for each contribution, send the stubs to the donating individual, and get the tickets to the MWF/AFMS Show in St. Charles in May to be put into the RMFMS bag. There will be at least one general prize ticket, maybe two or three, drawn

from each of the bags for the seven regional federations. After that, all tickets will be dumped into one bag, and further drawings will take place until all the prizes have been awarded.

I hope many of you will participate and be winners in Hickory, but you need not be present to win. I am also happy to accept any donated prizes for the raffle, or you can send them directly to Cheryl Neary. The more prizes, the more winners, and hopefully more money raised.

Cheryl's address is: **42 Jefferson Ave., Patchogue, NY 11772.** Linda and I are each donating a piece of jewelry for the Endowment Fund prizes. I hope some of you will donate prizes, too. My contact information is provided below. Please share this information with your club members and thanks for your consideration.

Please purchase some tickets – and hopefully get your ticket drawn in St. Charles in May. If you would like to donate a prize, please donate as soon as you can.

My contact information is:

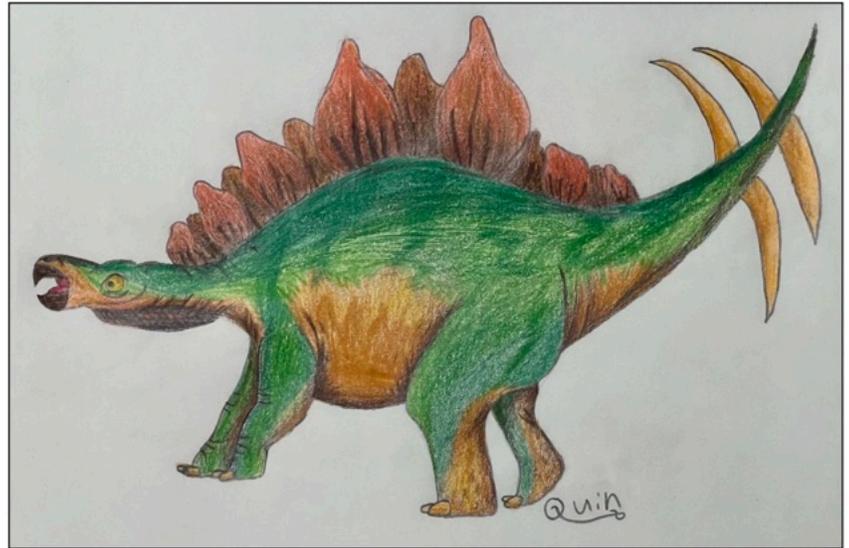
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Stegosaurus

Quin Armstrong (10), Flatirons Mineral Club, CO

We've been learning about dinosaur fossils in Junior Geologist Club, and I was especially excited to discover that the *Stegosaurus* was first found right here in Colorado around 1877, in the Morrison Formation.

Stegosaurus later became the Colorado State Fossil in 1982, thanks to a two-year campaign led by teacher and FMC member Ruth Sawdo and here students, who convinced the legislature and Governor Lamm to make it official.



Since I love to draw, I watched a how-to video on YouTube and was inspired to create this freehand drawing of a *Stegosaurus*.

References:

- Fossil Era: <https://www.fossilera.com/pages/colorado-state-fossil-stegosaurus>.
- An Educational Happening - The Saga for the Colorado State Fossil, Flatirons Facets, March-April 2017, pgs. 10- 11; Reprinted from the March 2007 Flatirons Facets: <https://flatironsmineralclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/FMC-Newsletter-2017-03.pdf>.
- Art Land: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIUu76PxVKE>.

From Crack the News, December 2025



Where in the RMFMS is Rocky?

- Arizona?
- Kansas?
- Utah?

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Photo above: First December Snow somewhere in RMFMS. Public Domain.

Answers on page 15.

Unlocked Corners

Greg Jones, Wyoming PLAC

How a Wyoming Court Case Could Affect Public Land Access in the West

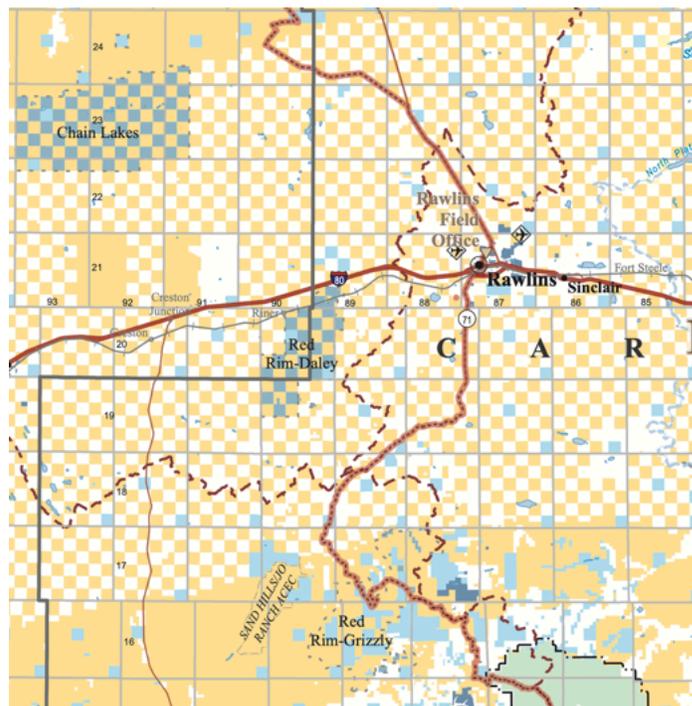
A distinctive feature on land maps of Wyoming—and much of the West—is the checkerboard pattern of alternating public and private land. This pattern dates to the Pacific Railway Acts of 1862 and 1864, which granted alternating sections of public land to railroad companies. As a result, millions of acres of public land touch only at their corners, creating what is commonly known as “corner-locked” sections.

Nationwide, more than 8 million acres of public land have been considered corner-locked, including nearly 2.5 million acres in Wyoming.

A recent Wyoming court case has clarified access to some of these lands. In October 2021, four hunters crossed at a shared corner between two public sections on the Iron Bar Ranch near Elk Mountain using a ladder-type device. They did not physically step on private land but did enter the ranch’s air space. Although criminal trespass charges were filed, a jury found the hunters not guilty.

The landowner filed a civil trespass lawsuit seeking approximately \$9 million in damages, arguing that crossing the corner interfered with the exclusive use and value of the private ranch and that corner-locked public lands should be treated as inaccessible. The U.S. District Court rejected those claims, citing federal law dating to 1885 that prohibits landowners from blocking lawful access to public lands through fencing, intimidation, or other means.

The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the lower court’s decision. In October 2025, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the landowner’s appeal, leaving the lower court rulings in place.



Map showing checkerboard pattern of public land near Rawlins, Carbon and Sweetwater Counties, Wyoming. Key: yellow- BLM, green- US Forest Service, light blue- state, dark blue-Wyoming Game and Fish, white- private. Source: Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Land Status Map; 2025.

As a result, corner crossing is now considered legal within the six states under the 10th Circuit’s jurisdiction: Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico, Kansas, and Oklahoma.

In other Western states not in the 10th District, corner crossing remains legally unresolved. Some of these states have significant amounts of corner-locked acreage.

While the Wyoming case may improve access for rockhounds and mineral collectors in the affected states, caution is still advised. Crossings must occur precisely at section corners and avoid damage to private property like fences. Foot travel across accessed public sections will generally be required.

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Unlocked Corners — continued from page 8

A ladder or similar device may be required to step between public parcels and over fences.

Collectors should always follow federal and state regulations and consult land-management agencies when uncertain.

Courtesy matters. Communicating respectfully with landowners, when appropriate, may help avoid conflicts.

Landowners and ranchers have not given up on the corner crossing issue and are exploring other means like legislation to restrict access. Some hunters are now focused on “island acreage” —public land that is surrounded by private land and currently unreachable.

Public land access issues continue to evolve. Collectively we need to monitor their potential impact on rockhounding and collecting.

Club Corner – Sublette County Rockhounds

Leane Gray, SCR Member

On November 15, 2025, the Sublette County Rockhounds enjoyed their annual Christmas potluck with silent auctions, raffles, pajama contest, and gift exchange at the SW Sublette Senior Citizen Center in Marbleton. About 60 members participated and contributed to a delicious meal. The Club provided a turkey and prime rib, and the club members brought a range of delicacies to round out the meal.



David Ream, left, & Gwynn Kaiser, right, won first and second prizes in the adult holiday pajama contest. Sophia Ream won the junior contest.



All photos by Lynn Wittlieff.

A rock-related gift exchange occurred with many fun, useful, and interesting gifts. The silent auction and raffles represented a mix of holiday-themed items and beautiful gem and mineral selections.



Melody Ames holding the Advent Calendar with Club President, Jim Gray.

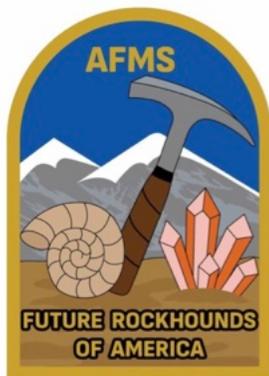
A new prize this year was an Advent Calendar proposed by member Charla Goe and filled with items donated by many members to fill the 24 days of Christmas. The winner of the Calendar was Melody Ames. The emptied calendar will be returned to the Club in the Spring to be filled again for next Christmas. Everyone seemed to enjoy this new idea.

Latest Edition of Crack the News, the AFMS Newsletter for Juniors

Be sure to send every junior in your club a copy to read!

Dennis Gertenbach, CTN Editor

The latest edition of *Crack the News*, the AFMS newsletter written by kids and teens for kids and teens is now available at <https://www.juniors.amfed.org/juniors-newsletter>. In this edition, juniors from around the country wrote about their juniors club, the Hope Diamond, and what to do with their badges, plus created artwork about prehistoric crayfish, *Stegosaurus*, horn coral, and the Chalk Emerald. We also recognized past contributors to *Crack the News* who won juniors awards in last year's AFMS bulletin contest and introduced the new Future Rockhounds of America membership patch.



Every junior who contributes to *Crack the News* receives a patch featuring George the Geode, the mascot of the newsletter. Encourage

the kids and teens in your club to send an article, poem, artwork, or photos for the next edition.

We are still looking for articles from juniors about their juniors club, including photos of their activities. Perhaps one of your juniors would like to write about their juniors club.

Details about where to send your contribution are at <https://www.juniors.amfed.org/juniors-newsletter>; just scroll down to the section "Calling all junior journalists, writers, poets, photographers, and artists..." Not only will your juniors receive a George the Geode patch, but they can share their knowledge and excitement about rocks, minerals, and fossils with kids and teens across the country.



Where in the RMFMS is Rocky?

- Arizona?
- Kansas?
- Utah?

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Snow somewhere in RMFMS.
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Answers on page 15.

What's in the Subsurface: Elk Creek Carbonatite, REE/REM, and Critical Minerals

Mike Nelson, csrockguy@yahoo.com, Colorado Springs Mineralogical Society

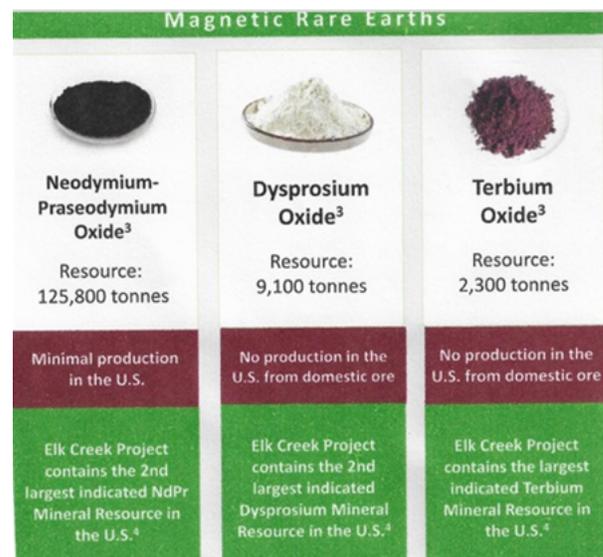
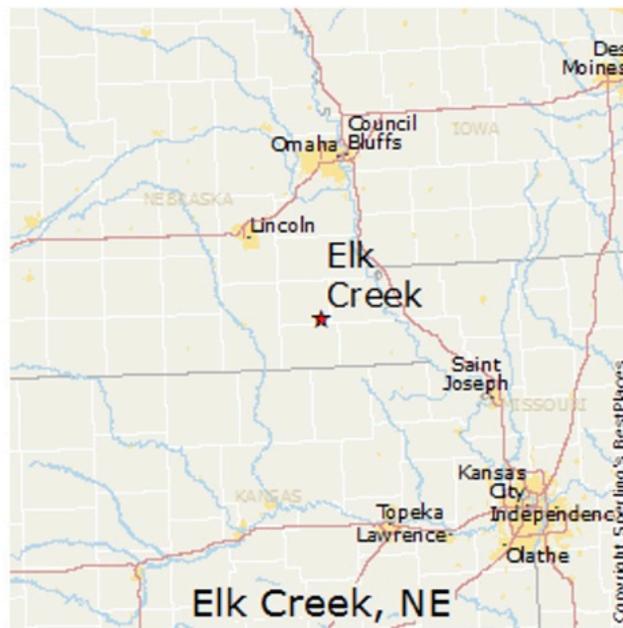
For many reasons, the national news today is not overly enjoyable to read; however, most rockhounds have noted the great interest in REE/REM (Rare Earth Elements and Minerals). Geologists have been fixated on these groups for years but could not attract much attention. However, it appears someone in D.C. woke up, after a Rip Van Winkle nap, and discovered China has a foothold on many Rare Earth Elements (REE) and Critical Minerals (see September 2025 RMFMS Newsletter article on antimony).

Perhaps a solution exists as we watch the progress associated with the Elk Creek REE-Critical Minerals project in far southeastern Nebraska.

The newspapers and Wall Street financiers (at least some of them) have noted the project is the largest niobium and the second largest proven Rare Earth Elements (REE) mine project in the U.S. Someone in Washington, a Rip Van Winkle sort of chap, awoke after 20 years and interpreted his dream that REE were needed for a gazillion high tech products in both civilian and defense applications. The movers and shakers, having been immersed in cultural wars rather than development, suddenly realized that the U.S. must import our supply of REE/Critical Minerals from several different countries although most comes from China. Now, if a REE producing country decides to close the mineral spigot coming to the U.S, well that is serious business. Again, see the September article on antimony.

So, the discovery of this REE/Critical Minerals deposit in rural Nebraska is a very major event for our country. The company operating/owning the deposit is Colorado-based NioCorp, a play on one of the major elements of interest, niobium. According to NioCorp the Elk Creek project is "shovel ready" although they continue to hunt for additional funding needed for a complete move to commercial operations.

The chart below is from a NioCorp prospectus and lists the major minerals, along with their projected tonnage, during a projected mine life span of 30+ years.



continued on page 12

Elk Creek Carbonatite & Critical Minerals — continued from page 11

| Critical Minerals | | |
|--|---|--|
|  <p>Ferroniobium</p> <p>Resource: 970,300 tonnes</p> |  <p>Scandium Oxide</p> <p>Resource: 11,337 tonnes</p> |  <p>Titanium Dioxide (or TiCl₄)²</p> <p>Resource: 4,221,000 tonnes</p> |
| No production in the U.S. | No production in the U.S. | High import reliance for U.S. |
| Highest grade Niobium project under development in N.A. ¹ | Largest planned producer in N.A. | Is expected to be produced by NioCorp as a co-product. |

Morningstar.com, in accessing the stock value of NioCorp, has a more detailed explanation of the minerals. "Niobium is used to produce specialty alloys as well as High Strength, Low Alloy steel, which is a lighter, stronger steel used in automotive, structural, and pipeline applications. Scandium is a specialty metal that can be combined with aluminum to make alloys with increased strength and improved corrosion resistance. Scandium is also a critical component of advanced solid oxide fuel cells. Titanium is used in various lightweight alloys and is a key component of pigments used in paper, paint and plastics and is also used for aerospace applications, armor, and medical implants. Magnetic rare earths, such as neodymium, praseodymium, terbium, and dysprosium are critical to the making of neodymium-iron-boron magnets, which are used across a wide variety of defense and civilian applications."

Since this is a science article, what about the geological setting? OK. The REE/Critical Minerals project is located within a rock unit termed the Elk Creek Carbonatite, a type of interesting, intrusive, igneous rock composed of at least 50% carbonate minerals. At Elk Creek these carbonate minerals are primarily dolomite, calcite, and ankerite with

accessory barite, ilmenite, rutile, quartz and others. Blessington and others (2022) described the carbonatite as "a multilithologic carbonatite comprised of an early apatite-dolomite carbonatite, a middle/heavy REE-enriched magnetite-dolomite carbonatite, and a late-stage light REE-enriched, barite-dolomite carbonatite," The carbonatite was intruded into the older Precambrian (Proterozoic) igneous and metamorphic rocks that form the "basement rocks" of southern Nebraska. These country rocks at Elk Creek represent the suturing of Proterozoic island arcs, Yavapai Terrain, onto the older more stable craton (Laurentia) to the north.

Carlson and Treves (2005) described the carbonatite as lower Paleozoic in age (Cambrian). In addition, Peterman (Z. E. Peterman, personal communication to Carlson, 1985) dated a biotite from the carbonatite as ~544 Ma (Cambrian). The intrusion and the basement rocks are now covered with about 200 m of Pennsylvanian marine sedimentary rocks and lesser amounts of glacial drift. That fact indicates that post-Cambrian sedimentary rocks are absent from the intrusion and the basement rocks until the Pennsylvanian marine rocks appear. There is no surficial representation of the carbonatite intrusion.

However, the question now becomes, were pre-Pennsylvanian rocks once present in the Elk Creek area? That is a type of question that I encouraged my students to ask. Don't let the instructor just stop with that positive statement about the presence of later Paleozoic rocks. In my olden days of grad school (pre-plate tectonics days) we often referred to a Paleozoic, high platform area (a positive area) trending southwest to northeast through the center of the country as the Transcontinental Arch. Here Paleozoic rocks were thin or absent due to periodic rejuvenation of basement highs. Students *assumed* that a section of Paleozoic sediments were deposited in the central part of the U.S. but were thinned or destroyed by erosion during uplift. Later

continued on page 13

Elk Creek Carbonatite & Critical Minerals — continued from page 12

seismic work associated with exploratory drilling indicates that smaller scale transverse (to the Transcontinental Arch), basement controlled, tectonic features probably had significant control on depositional patterns (Carlson, 1999). In addition, later Paleozoic uplift of the Nemaha Ridge was most likely responsible for the destruction of earlier Paleozoic rocks from the Elk Creek area (see later discussion on Nemaha Ridge).

A little prior history.

Back in the late 1960s (my undergrad days) and early 1970s (my early teaching days) surficial igneous rocks were virtually unknown in Kansas with the exception of a few exposures of kimberlite diatremes in northeastern part of the state near Manhattan, and the strange occurrence of lamproite (ultrapotassic, mantle-derived, volcanic or subvolcanic rocks) intrusions in southeastern Kansas—the Rose and Silver City Domes. The diatremes are pipe-like (shape) structures containing igneous rocks that originated deep in the earth, maybe 100-400 miles, and exploded to the surface in a very short time. They are of great interest to geologists for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that most diamonds in the world are found in these structures—i.e. those in South Africa. So, I always took my students on field trips to Riley County, near Manhattan, to examine these features and allow them to collect small garnets from the known (at that time) exposures.

The Kansas diatremes are part of the Central North American Kimberlites Field stretching about 3000 miles from Somerset Island in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago (Nunavut) south through the Saskatchewan fields and ending in Riley and Marshall Counties in northeast Kansas. The kimberlites in this corridor are mid-Cretaceous in age (~105-95 Ma). All structures are located at the highly attenuated lithospheric edge of the North

American Craton, facilitating edge-driven convection (Kjarsgaard and others, 2017).

NOTE: I can assure you that in 1971, or in 2025, I was not familiar with Edge Driven Convection :)

At about the same time as we were collecting garnets, the Nebraska Conservation and Survey Division, along with the USGS, were flying aeromagnetic surveys (pulling a magnetometer behind the plane) over the southeastern part of the state trying to see if the emplacements of the Kansas diatremes, now known to number 13 in 2025, continued into Nebraska. The igneous kimberlites contain ultrabasic rocks that produce a positive magnetic high. Their quest was unsuccessful; however, they did discover a “vertical gravity gradient high” (Drenth, 2014) over Elk Creek where later drilling confirmed the presence of the carbonatite intrusion.

Early on, MolyCorp and Cominco American both investigated the economic potential of the carbonatite. In 2010 Quantum (now NioCorp, name changed in 2013) acquired the mineral rights and started drilling, that continues today, with plans to construct an underground mine and harvest REE and Critical Minerals.

The mineralization of the REE (<https://miningdataonline.com/>) is within the REMs:

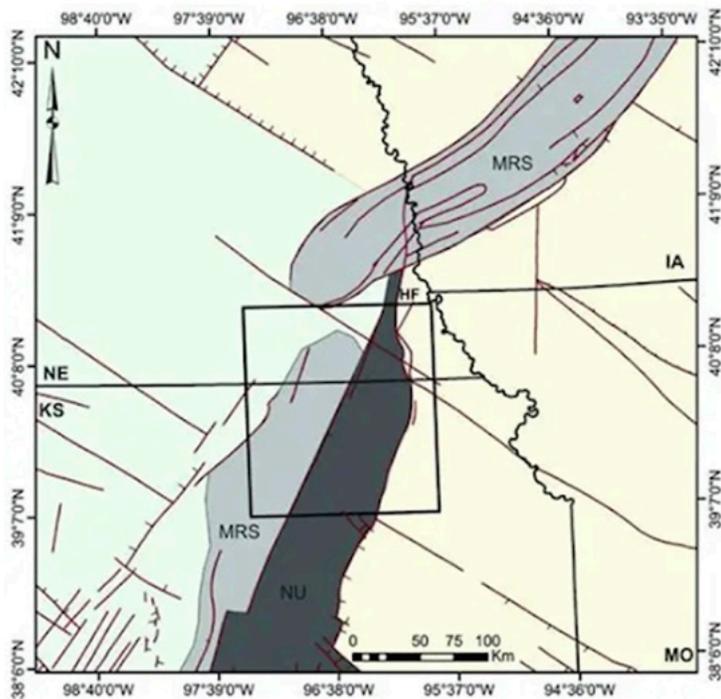
- Bastnäsite ($[(\text{Ce}, \text{La}, \text{Y})\text{CO}_3\text{F}]$);
- Parisite ($\text{Ca}[\text{Ce}, \text{La}]_2[\text{CO}_3]_3\text{F}_2$);
- Synchysite ($\text{Ca}(\text{Ce}, \text{La})(\text{CO}_3)_2\text{F}$);
- Monazite ($[(\text{Ce}, \text{La})\text{PO}_4]$).

The niobium, titanium, and scandium mineralization zones are found scattered throughout the carbonatite although most niobium comes from niobium-rich Pyrochlore Supergroup minerals, disseminated and included, in ilmenite and magnetite. (Open access papers at PorterGeo.com).

continued on page 14

Elk Creek Carbonatite & Critical Minerals — continued from page 13

Carlson and Treves (2005), in describing the tectonics of the area in relationship to the carbonatite intrusion, noted the following framework (see diagram below). The country rocks are



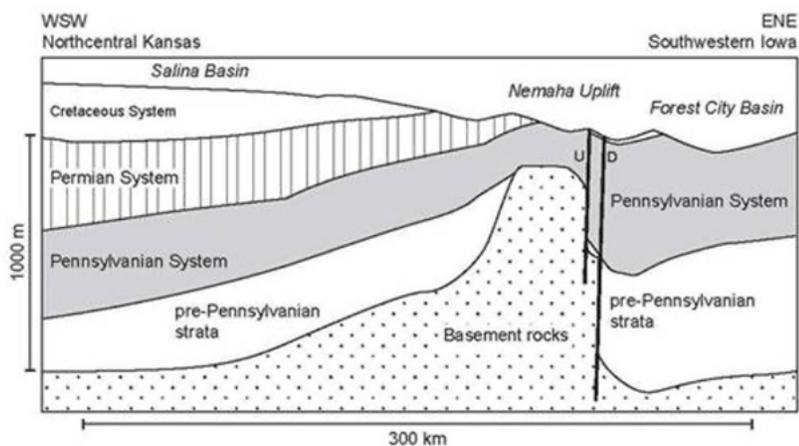
This map shows the intersections of Penokean Orogen rocks in the northeast, Central Plains Orogen rocks in the southwest, dark gray Nemaha Ridge, and light gray Mid Continent Rift Zone. All of these tectonic zones are related (my understanding) to/with a multitude of basement tectonics.

composed of low to medium grade metamorphic gneiss and schist of island arc origin with ages ~1.84 to 1.71 Ga. Igneous granitic intrusions came along about 1.78 to 1.35 Ma. The intrusion of the ~544 Ma carbonatite likely was influenced by several (probably all related) nearby features (see figure below):

- 1) the Mid Continent Rift System (MRZ ~1.2 Ga), a failed continental rift extending from Oklahoma northeast to Lake Superior and beyond;
- 2) the buried boundary sutures of two Precambrian terrains (mountain building events) termed the Penokean Orogen (1.84) (with exposures in

Wisconsin and Minnesota and related subsurface accretions to the south, the Yavapai Terrain), and the Central Plains Orogen (1.78 Ma), Proterozoic mountains now preserved in the subsurface of Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri;

- 3) the Nemaha Ridge or Anticline, a buried granite high associated with a larger tectonic/structural zone trending almost north-south from Oklahoma City to Omaha. The Ridge is faulted along the sides and runs parallel to the MCZ located about 40 miles to the west. Its association with the MRZ might indicate isostatic uplift was responsible for the elevation of this strange ridge. Parallel to the Ridge is the large Humbolt Fault System, the source for most of the small Kansas earthquakes, The Elk Creek Carbonatite was intruded very close to the crest of the Anticline which was then responsible for destroying the early and middle Paleozoic rocks. The age of the Nemaha uplift seems centered at around 300 Ma.



Simplified cross section of Nemaha Uplift after Steeples, 1982. According to Carlson and Treves (2005) early and middle Paleozoic rocks are absent at the Elk Creek Carbonatite since the intrusion is very near the center of the uplift. As Don Steeples, my old friend from long ago college days, would say, "who would expect a granite mountain range not far from the surface in Kansas?"

continued on page 15

Elk Creek Carbonatite & Critical Minerals — continued from page 14

The Elk Creek Carbonatite also seems related to other carbonatites emplaced across North America ~550 Ma. All seem related to deep seated suture zones similar to those in the Elk Creek accretionary material along the southern extension of the Penokean Orogen near its boundary with the Central States Orogen. Evidently a rejuvenation of these suture zones during the Cambrian allowed for the emplacement of the carbonatites (Carlson and Treves, 2005).

So, with all the news about a lack of REE/Critical Minerals being mined in the U.S., and our dangerous reliance with somewhat unfriendly foreign entities, it would seem that the Elk Creek project has a better than average chance of succeeding. I guess only time will tell.

I hope readers can understand what I am trying to explain and that understanding the discovery of Elk Creek is exciting. Not only exciting for what Elk Creek may produce, but exciting to think about the decades-long perseverance of generations of geologists who brought the project to fruition (we hope).

I also hope that readers will examine some of the references listed below. I could not have written a complete paragraph without consulting numerous professional papers written by geologists "much smarter than me." So, I offer them my sincere thanks for their fantastic presentations.

References Cited:

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Where in the RMFMS is Rocky? — Answers

Linda Jaeger, Editor

We have clubs from 13 states in the RMFMS. Have you been there? Do you recognize the photos from the areas shown this month? **I would love for you to send an awesome photo from your state with a caption and location to print!** RMFMS has amazing country and activities to fill your senses.

Here are the answers for the photos on pages 5, 7, and 10:

- page 5: 1896 MelanBridge in **Topeka, Kansas**
- page 7: Yavapai point, **Grand Canyon in Arizona**
- page 10: **Bryce Canyon in Utah**

Look for more beautiful locations next month from our member states: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wyoming.



STUDYING PALEONTOLOGY? GEOLOGY? EARTH SCIENCE?



The Hell Creek
Paleontological Society

Apply
January 1st -
March 31st

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY 2026

A minimum of 1 and maximum of 3 scholarships will be granted.
The maximum award amount for each scholarship is \$1,000.00

SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS:

- The Hell Creek Paleontological Society Scholarship application process is designed to support individuals pursuing their education in paleontology, geology, or related fields.
- Scholarships are awarded to fund various educational expenses at any accredited university or college, with the primary goal of advancing the applicant's knowledge and expertise in their chosen field.
- Both members and non-members of the Society are encouraged to apply and demographics (race, ethnicity, financial situation, etc.) will not be collected or reviewed, thereby widening access to educational funding in paleontology.
- Scholarship recipients are expected to fulfill reporting requirements by sharing their experiences and outcomes with the Society.



DOWNLOAD & SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION AT:



[www.thehellcreekpaleosociety.org/
scholarships](http://www.thehellcreekpaleosociety.org/scholarships)

MORE INFORMATION:



scholarships@thehellcreekpaleosociety.org

The Hell Creek Paleontological Society is a 501(c)-3 non-profit organization focused on the study of fossils with the goals of inspiring and furthering the educational aspirations of our community through knowledge and scholarship.

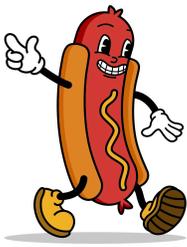
2026 Scholarship Opportunity

Heather Aziz, President Hellcreek Paleo Society

The Hell Creek Paleontological Society Scholarship application process is designed to support individuals pursuing their education in paleontology, geology, or related fields. Scholarships are awarded to fund various educational expenses at any accredited university or college within the United States, with the primary goal of advancing the applicant's knowledge and expertise in their chosen field. Each year, a minimum of one and a maximum of three scholarships will be granted, and the maximum award amount for each scholarship is \$1,000.00. One noteworthy aspect of this opportunity is its inclusivity, as both members and non-members of the Society are encouraged to apply, and demographics (race, ethnicity, financial situation, etc.) will not be collected or reviewed, thereby widening access to educational funding in paleontology.

The evaluation of scholarship applications is entrusted to the Society's elected scientific committee, who carefully assess each applicant's qualifications, dedication, and potential contributions to the field. Final approval for all awards rests with the Society's Board, ensuring a fair and thorough selection process. In addition to receiving financial support, scholarship recipients are expected to fulfill reporting requirements by sharing their experiences and outcomes with the Society. This can be achieved through either a brief presentation at a regular Society meeting or by submitting a note for publication in the Society newsletter. These reporting requirements not only provide transparency but also enable scholarship recipients to give back to the community by sharing their educational journey and the impact of the scholarship.

Applications for 2026 will be accepted from January 1st to March 31st, 2026. Notice of award will be sent to selected recipients no later than April 30th, 2026, with awards being mailed by May 30th, 2026. Completed applications must be emailed and submitted with supporting documents (essays, reference letters, etc.) uploaded as attachments. Please email all required materials to: www.thehellcreekpaleosociety.org/scholarships. [See the flyer on page 14.]



Hot Links – Editor's Picks

Linda Jaeger, Editor

Below are some hot links you might find interesting. Just click on the link — it will open the web page in your browser.

- **The Loneliest Seismometers on Earth**

<https://www.usgs.gov/news/science-snippet/loneliest-seismometers-earth>

- **NASA's Voyager Just Crossed the Edge of the Solar System — and Found Something Wild**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jmo0JyGOC3M>

- **Blue Diamonds**

<https://geology.com/diamond/blue-diamonds/>

Lapidary Safety

Created using AI with assistance from Dennis Gertenbach, FMC

When the weather is too cold outside to go collecting, many of us continue to enjoy our hobby with indoor lapidary projects. Lapidary safety focuses on preventing injury from flying debris, inhaling fine dust (especially silica, which causes silicosis), and machine hazards by using essential protection (PPE) like safety glasses, respirator, hearing protection, and gloves, working with proper ventilation (wet methods are best), keeping the workspace clean (wet mop/vacuum, not dry sweep), securing stones, wearing appropriate attire (no loose clothing/jewelry), and understanding specific mineral risks.

Here are some safety tips for cutting, forming, and finishing stones, minerals, and gemstones:

Essential Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Eye Protection: Safety goggles or glasses are a must to shield from flying grit and shards.
- Respiratory Protection: A P100 respirator or dust mask is crucial for inhaling fine silica dust; paper masks are not enough.
- Hearing Protection: Earplugs or earmuffs for loud equipment.
- Hand Protection: Gloves for handling sharp stones and chemicals, but take them off when using polishing wheels to avoid entanglement.



Workshop and Equipment Safety

- Ventilation: Work in a well-ventilated area, ideally with dust collection, or use a glovebox for maximum protection.
- Secure Work: Secure stones in vices or use dop sticks; do not hold small pieces directly on spinning wheels.
- Water Use: Keep stones wet with water to minimize dust and cool the stone.
- Electrical Safety: Inspect cords, use GFCIs, and keep water away from electrical components.

Safe Practices

- Attire: Tie back long hair, secure loose sleeves, and avoid loose jewelry.
- Machinery: Do not wear gloves when polishing; use ring clamps. Do not wear rings and never polish chains on wheels.
- Chemicals: Rinse skin immediately with plenty of water if splashed with acids. Neutralize spills with baking soda.
- Minerals: Be extra cautious with hard stones (agate) that create sharp shards and softer stones (turquoise) that can crack

Be safe this winter, so you can enjoy collecting again as the weather warms up!

From *Flatirons Facets*, January-February 2026, bulletin of the Flatirons Mineral Club

Mineral Lovers! . . . Going to Tucson? Interested, but Not Going to Tucson?

Linda Jaeger, RMFMS Editor

One of the many activities in the Tucson area during February is the **Tucson Gem and Mineral Show, February 12-15, 2026**. If you are a mineral aficionado, you might be interested in the **FM-TGMS-MSA** (Friends of Mineralogy-Tucson Gem & Mineral Society-Mineralogical Society of America) **Symposium** being held at the same venue on **Saturday, February 14**.

The Symposium includes speakers on:

- Cuprorivaite: Egyptian Blue, Humanity's First Inorganic Pigment
- Heaven and Hell in Ohio
- New Hampshire's Red, White & Blue Minerals
- Pleochroism in Minerals
- An Ocean Within – New Insights Into Structure and Phases of Water in Minerals
- Finding Art in Minerals: How an Interest in Color and Form Ignited My Passion for Minerals

For the first time the Symposium will be a hybrid affair. You can attend in person or remotely via Zoom (small charge for Zoom attendees). Full attendance in person or remotely can provide 6 credits for your Professional Geologist (PG) licensing. **For more information**, check out the *Bulletin of Friends of*

Mineralogy (December 2025) at: <https://www.friendsofmineralogy.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/FM-Newsletter-2025-December-V55No4.pdf>

For details you can also see the Tucson Gem & Mineral Society show page, <https://www.tgms.org/show>

Friends of Mineralogy has a Chapter in Colorado, which is one of our RMFMS clubs. Thanks to Bill Stephens, President of Friends of Mineralogy National and a member of the EFMLS, for the show information. Bill is a Past-president of EFMLS, and I send the *RMF News* to him as part of the regional federation newsletter exchange.

Bill also mentioned that "FM National, in cooperation with its chapters, will be running at least two field trips this coming year 2026. One to the Hogg Mine in Lagrange, GA (a spring machine dig) and one to Treasure Mountain in Little Falls, NY for Herks (a fall power tool dig). We may do another dig out west at some point, and I'm open to suggestions for sites. **These trips are members only digs but membership is inexpensive and worth the cost.**"

Upcoming Shows and Events in the RMFMS

If your club has show information that you would like to have listed in the *Rocky Mountain Federation News*, please email the information to the editor (including show flyers) — <LJGRALG at aol.com>. As with many of the other email addresses in the newsletter, you will need to remove the chevrons, < >, and replace the spaces and the "at" with the correct symbol, @ .

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 2/27-3/1, 2026 | Denver Gem & Mineral Guild | Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 15200 W 6th Ave, Golden, CO 80401 | |
| 3/7-8/2026 | Siera County Rock & Gem Society | Sierra County Fair Barn, 1321 Hyde Ave, Truth of Consequences, NM | Megan Holden; scragssierracounty@gmail.com; scrags.org |
| 3/20-22/2026 | Albuquerque Gem & Mineral Club | Expo NM State Fairgrounds, Kerr Scott Bldg, 4285 Trinity Rd, Albuquerque, NM; enter Gate 3 @ San Pedro & Copper | Roy McKinney, 505.715.0138; show-chair@agmc.info; http://www.agmc.info |
| 3/20-22/2026 | Fort Collins Rockhounds | McKee Building, The Ranch/Larimer County Fairgrounds, 5280 Arena Cir., Loveland, CO | https://www.fortcollinsrockhounds.org/gemAndMineralShow.shtml |
| 4/18-19/2026 | Northwest Arkansas G&M Society | Northwest Arkansas Armed Forces Reserve Center, 6800 SW Minuteman Ave, Bentonville, AR | Cathy Feather, 539.777.7575; nwarockhounds@gmail.com |
| 4/24-26/2026 | Wichita Gem & Mineral Society | Cessna Activity Center, 2744 Geoge Washington Blvd, Wichita, KS | Gene Maggard, 316.742.3746; gandpmaggard@gmail.com; https://wichtagemandmineralsociety.org/ |
| 4/24-26/2026 | Wasatch Gem Society | Bastian Agricultural Center, 2100 W 11400 S, South Jordan, UT | Roberta Chase, 801.541.7569; roberta.chase@outlook.com; https://wasatchgemsociety.com/ |
| 5/1-3/2026 | McPherson Gem & Mineral Club | 4-H Fairgrounds, 710 W Woodside, McPherson, KS | Larry Hackney, 203.247.4300; larryrocks538@gmail.com; www.mgmc.club |
| 5/2-3/2026 | Southern Nevada Gem & Mineral Society | Boulder City Spring Jamboree, 900 Arizona St, Boulder City, NV | Orville Wiemers, sngmsjamboreeshowchair@gmail.com; www.SNGMS.net |
| 5/15-17/2026 | Cache Rock & Gem Club | Cache County Events Center, 450 South 500 West, Logan, UT | Brett Fannesbeck, crgc.showmanager@gmail.com; cacherockandgemclub.com |
| 5/19-21/2026 | Sublette County Rockhounds | Sublette County Fairgrounds, Event Center, 10937 Hwy 189, Big Piney, WY | Jim Gray, 307.260.6442; email jimgray@wyoming.com |

Below are upcoming regional federation shows:

| | California Federation | Eastern Federation | Midwest Federation | Northwest Federation | Rocky Mountain Federation | South Central Federation | Southeast Federation |
|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 2026 | | Charleston, WV October 18-20 | AFMS/MWF St. Charles, IL May 22-24 | Missoula, MT March 20-22 | Tulsa, OK July 9-12 | | |
| 2027 | | | | | | | |

JEWELRY, GEM & MINERAL SHOW
Free Admission!

Gems
Books
Displays
Minerals
Sculptures
Demonstrations

Fossils
Geodes
Jewelry
Crystals
Kids' Activities
Over 25 Sellers



February 27 - March 1, 2026
 Hours: 10 - 6 Friday & Saturday 10 - 5 Sunday

JEFFERSON COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
 15200 W 6TH Ave. Golden, CO 80401

Photo of Natrolite
 North Table Mtn.
 © Ron Wolf

**2026 Spring Gem, Mineral
 and Jewelry Show**

**ARKANSAS
 ROCKS!!**

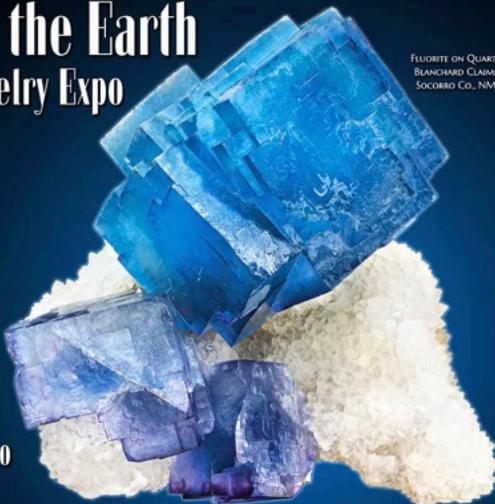


Saturday **Sunday**
 April 18 ● 9 - 5 ● April 19 ● 10 - 4

*NW Arkansas Armed Forces Reserve Center
 6800 SW Minuteman St., Bentonville, AR 72712
 (The Armory)*

Northwest Arkansas Gem & Mineral Society

Treasures of the Earth
Gem, Mineral, Jewelry Expo



FLUORITE ON QUARTZ
 BLANCHARD CLAINS
 SOCORRO CO., NM

Albuquerque, New Mexico
March 20-22, 2026

Reminder:
 Advertise your Show in as many Free locations as possible!

- Local newspapers
- Current events sections!
- Local TV stations
- Community Calendars
- Other local shows

Advertise in the Rock & Gem Magazine!
 Send the information in early so it's published in the magazine as well as online:
www.rockngem.com/showdate-submissions/

Info from CFMS Newsletter, April 2024

**63rd Annual 2026 Fort Collins Rockhounds
Gem & Mineral Show**

Featuring Fossils & Geodes
Friday March 20 4pm-8pm
Saturday March 21 9am-6pm
Sunday March 22 10am-4pm

Details at www.fortcollinsrockhounds.org
fcrockhounds@gmail.com • (No dealer space available)

Thomas M. McKee 4-H, Youth & Community Building
 Larimer County Fairgrounds

Fort Collins Rockhounds Colorado
The Ranch
 Larimer County's Event Capital

**BIGHORN BASIN
ROCK SHOW**

**MAY
29-30
2026**

Fri 1pm-7pm
 Sat 9am-5pm

Location:
 Park County Fairgrounds
 Powell, WY

Admission \$5
 Kids 12 & under FREE

Gems · Minerals · Fossils
 Kids Activities

For More Information:
www.bighornbasinrockshow.com

**RTM TULSA
ROCK & GEM
SHOW**

Exchange Center at Expo Square
 4145 E 21st St
 Tulsa, OK 74114

Also hosting
 Rocky Mountain
 Federation Convention

**July
10-12,
2026**

- Rocks
- Gems
- Minerals
- Fossils
- Jewelry
- Free Kid Zone
- Demonstrations
- Fluorescent Display
- Collection Displays
- Silent Auction

\$7 Adults
\$12 All Show Pass
 Kids 12 and under free
 with adult admission

Military and First
 Responders free with ID
 Scouts free in uniform

**9-6 Fri & Sat
10-5 Sun**

trmsok.org

2025-2026 Executive Committee – composed of the Officers & the State Directors

Officers:

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| President | Jim Gray | <jimgray at wyoming.com> |
| Vice President | Steve Kaminski | <scsckamin at gmail.com> |
| Secretary | Liz Thomas | <mygemsrock at gmail.com> |
| Treasurer | Gene Maggard | <gandpmaggard at gmail.com> |
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| Past President | Bob Regner | <Rnregner at aol.com> |
| Past President | Richard Jaeger | <RjgrSci at aol.com> |

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| KS | Larry Beck | <Lkbeckfam at gmail.com> |
| ND/SD/NE | Lori Loomis | <sdnестatedirector at gmail.com> |
| NM/TX | Donna Regner | <Dwanna7 at aol.com> |
| OK/AR | Roberta Wagle | <waglemom at gmail.com> |
| | | |
| UT | Daniel Ahlemann | <ahlemann.rockandgemclub at gmail.com> |
| WY | Leane Gray | <lgray at wyoming.com> |

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2025-2026 Committee Chairs

| | | |
|---|---------------------|--|
| ACROY (AFMS Club Rockhound of the Year) | Chris Whitney-Smith | <ask.chrisws at yahoo.com> |
| All American Club | Roberta Wagle | <waglemom at gmail.com> |
| BEAC (Bulletin Editors Advisory Committee) & Bulletin Editors Contest | Linda Jaeger | <LJGRALG at aol.com> |
| Boundaries | DeLane Cox | <delanec3 at earthlink.net> |
| Convention Advisor | Liz Thomas | <mygemsrock at gmail.com> |
| Credentials | Roberta Wagle | <waglemom at yahoo.com> |
| Directory | Lori Loomis | <riggsoldchap at yahoo.com> |
| Editor of Newsletter | Linda Jaeger | <LJGRALG at aol.com> |
| Finance | Wayne Cox | <WayneC3 at earthlink.net> |
| Fluorescent Tech | Brian Walko | <bwalko at earthextractions.com> |
| Fossils Tech | Mike Nelson | <csrockguy at yahoo.com> |
| Gold Pan Award | Richard Jaeger | <RjgrSci at aol.com> |
| Insurance | Gene Maggard | <gandpmaggard at gmail.com> |
| International Relations | Mike Nelson | <csrockguy at yahoo.com> |
| Juniors Program | Michelle Cauley | <michelle.cauley at dakotacollege.edu> |
| Lapidary Tech | | |
| Long Range Planning | Liz Thomas | <mygemsrock at gmail.com> |
| Long Range Planning | Richard Jaeger | <RjgrSci at aol.com> |
| Long Range Planning | Judy Beck, chair | <Lkbeckfam at gmail.com> |
| Mineralogical Tech | Mike Nelson | <csrockguy at yahoo.com> |
| Name Badges | Richard Jaeger | <RjgrSci at aol.com> |
| New Program Contest | Gene Maggard | <gandpmaggard at gmail.com> |
| Nominating Committee | Bob Regner | <Rnregner at aol.com> |
| Nominating Committee | Liz Thomas | <mygemsrock at gmail.com> |
| Nominating Committee | Jim Gray | <jimgray at wyoming.com> |

continued on next page

2025-2026 Committee Chairs – *continued*

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Parliamentarian | Gene Maggard | <gandpmaggard at gmail.com> |
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| PLAC - CO | | <> |
| PLAC - KS | Mike Nelson | <csrockguy at yahoo.com> |
| PLAC - NM/TX | | |
| PLAC - OK/AR | | <> |
| PLAC - ND/SD/NE | Lori Loomis | <sdnestatedirector at gmail.com> |
| PLAC - UT/NV | | <> |
| PLAC - WY | Greg Jones | <wyojones at wyjones.com > |
| President's Hat | all past presidents | |
| Program Library | Gene & Peggy Maggard | <gandpmaggard at gmail.com> |
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| Safety | Jodi Brewster | <rmfmsafety2024@gmail.com> |
| Scholarship Committee | Richard Jaeger | <RjgrSci at aol.com> |
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| Supplies | Roberta Wagle | <waglemom at gmail.com> |
| Uniform Rules | Lee Whitebay | <lwhiteba at gmail.com> |
| Uniform Rules | Leon Reeder | <leonreeder47 at yahoo.com> |
| Uniform Rules | Les Presmyk | <presmyk at cox.net> |
| Webmaster | Tyler Jacobsen | <tyler@cacherockandgemclub.com> |
| Website Contest | Leane Gray | <Lgray at wyoming.com> |

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RMFMS Purpose & Policies – Excerpts from 2023 Directory (Revised)

- To bring about a closer association of the Earth Science Groups in the Rocky Mountain region.
- To increase and disseminate knowledge about minerals and other geologic materials.
- To encourage mineral study, collecting, and fashioning as a HOBBY.
- To sponsor local organizations interested in similar purposes.
- To encourage all clubs to publish bulletins and newsletters.
- To continue building up and promoting the use of the Federation Library of slide programs, videos, CDs, and DVDs to each member club.
- To distribute information and suggestions on the preparation and arrangement of specimens and materials for exhibit and display.
- To provide information and assistance to clubs holding Gem and Mineral Shows.
- To encourage clubs to support the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies Scholarship Foundation Fund.

AFMS Code of Ethics

- I will respect both private and public property and will do no collecting on privately owned land without the owner's permission.
- I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.
- I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain the boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.
- I will use no firearms or blasting material in collecting areas.
- I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind—fences, signs, buildings.
- I will leave all gates as found. I will build fires in designated or safe places only and will be certain they are completely extinguished before leaving the area.
- I will discard no burning material—matches, cigarettes, etc.
- I will fill all excavation holes, which may be dangerous to livestock.
- I will not contaminate wells, creeks or other water supply.
- I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

- To promote the concept that all members of all clubs are members of the RMFMS and the AFMS, and to encourage individual members and clubs to take responsibility for asking questions or making known that help is needed. To encourage more contacts between those working at the Federation level, between clubs, and between club members.
- To keep the members informed of problems and activities regarding the use of Public Lands.
- To continue to support Federation-sponsored programs.

The Rocky Mountain Federation is composed of a membership of approximately 14,000 members in the following states: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming.

The work of the Federation is directed by the Executive Committee, composed of: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, State Directors, and the two immediate Past-Presidents.

Reminder — next RMF Newsletter is the March 2026 issue. Deadline for articles is February 15, 2026.

- I will practice conservation and undertake to utilize fully and well the materials I have collected and will recycle my surplus for the pleasure and benefit of others.
- I will support the rockhound project H.E.L.P. (Help Eliminate Litter Please) and will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.
- I will cooperate with field trip leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.
- I will report to my club or Federation officers, Bureau of Land Management, or other authorities, any deposit of petrified wood or other materials on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.
- I will appreciate and protect our heritage of natural resources.
- I will observe the "Golden Rule," will use "Good Outdoor Manners" and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and public image of rockhounds everywhere.

