

# ROCK-A-GRAM



June-September, 2009



Volume 41, No. 1, Page 1

## General Meeting

Thursday, September 17, 2009

7:30 p.m.

### LOCATION

4619 69th Street North  
St. Petersburg, FL

# SHOW & TELL



Tell us about your  
summer vacation.



Show us what you collected  
over the summer.

It's September and DUES ARE DUE once again. Please give them to the membership chairman, *Dave Schwebel*, covering for *Carmen Lemke*, or *Sue Hazelden*, Treasurer.

**DUES ARE DUE!**  
**\$15 Individuals - \$20 per family**

If your last name starts with A-M, please bring goodies to our meeting.

## OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

*Bill Schmidt*, President ..... 727-822-8279  
Email: schmidwj@eckerd.edu

*Donna Remsnyder*, Vice President . 727-692-6006  
Email: d.remsnyder@verizon.net

*Sue Hazelden*, Treasurer ..... 727-321-5732  
Email: sujagems1@aol.com

*Julia Larson*, Recording Sec. .... 727-522-1254  
Email: glassgal0947@gmail.com

*Dave Schwebel*, Corr. Sec. .... 727-547-0364  
Email: dschwebel@tampabay.rr.com

*Dave Watson*, 3 yr. Director ..... 727-541-2917  
Email: bwatson1@tampabay.rr.com

*George Comas*, 2 yr. Director ..... 727-526-7176  
Email: gcomas@tampabay.rr.com

*Homer Rankhorn*, 1 yr. Director ..... 727-812-4002  
Email: homer@rankhorn.com

*Don Schlough*, Director ..... 727-470-9540  
Email: godguy4@yahoo.com

*Debbie Bremer*, Editor ..... 727-298-0061  
Rock-A-Gram Newsletter  
Email: bremerlapidary@yahoo.com

**SGAMS Clubhouse Address: 4619 69th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33709, [www.sgams.com](http://www.sgams.com)**

**Clubhouse Activities:** Listed on mailer coversheet and announced at membership meetings.  
**SGAMS Board of Director's Meetings:** 7:30 p.m., 1st Tuesday of each month; September - May.  
 All members are invited to attend SGAMS Board of Director's Meetings at our clubhouse.  
 We solicit your attendance, and constructive suggestions for improving our club.  
**General Meetings:** 7:30 p.m., 3rd Thursday of each month; September - May, at clubhouse.

## President's Message

Welcome Back!!

I hope your summer was fun, adventurous, restful, busy-good, peaceful, accomplished, satisfactory, - any combination of them or just plain better than expected. I look forward to stories of any rock hounding you did and remember your summer is our first program for the year.

The new board of directors has met for the first time and you can see the minutes of that meeting inside. Of note is that we have already voted in some new members.

Over our summer we had a dedicated bunch of regulars using the cabbing room. A gem tree class was taught and a faceter finished his requirements. The faceting room and office switched places. File cabinets, in excellent condition, were donated and so was shelving for the library. It all looks good and is working well. Some equipment repairs were done and more underway. The break room door going to the breeze way was finished. We received a lot of bead and lapidary magazines through donations. Also, the cabbing room has a bunch of stools now.

Stay tuned for upcoming plans as most of the committees that keep us going and accomplishing our mission have members working away. If you have some time, an ideal and/or an interest, please see any of your board members to get pointed in the right direction.

Thank You.

*Bill Schmidt, President*

## Lapidary Supplies

Wally's Natural Wonders  
6007 N. Armenia Ave.  
Tampa, FL 33604  
813-874-3131

They are closed Wednesday and Sunday. Their hours are 10:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. They do not have a website or cataloge (yet?). They carry supplies for pretty much all manufactures. Things like, cab machine belts, wheels, saw blades, etc. They also said if they didn't have something they could order it.

*Submitted by: Pat Joseph*

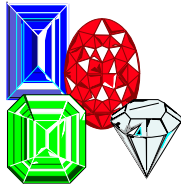
The Suncoast Gem and Mineral Society  
 a local non-profit club proudly presents:  
**40th Annual**

# Gem & Mineral Show and Sale

March 5, 6, 7, 2010  
 Friday & Saturday, 10 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
 Sunday, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**CONTINUOUS WORKING DEMONSTRATIONS**

- Bead Stringing
- Wirecraft
- Channel Work
- Gem Cutting



**DIAMONDS  
 EMERALDS  
 RUBIES  
 14K GOLD JEWELRY  
 DOOR PRIZES  
 EXHIBITS  
 AND  
 MUCH MORE....**

**ADMISSION**

Adults - \$5.00 good for all three days, children under 6 FREE  
 Students with parents or I.D. Card \$4.00

**DIRECTIONS**

- Minnreg Building  
 6340 126th Avenue No.  
 Largo
- From Tampa I-275 cross  
 Howard Franklin Bridge.  
 At exit 31B, take Ramp  
 (right) onto SR-688  
 (Ulmerton Rd) Merge  
 onto SR-686. Bear LEFT  
 (West) onto SR-688  
 (Ulmerton Rd) turn  
 LEFT (South-East)  
 onto US-19 N. Turn  
 RIGHT (West) onto  
 126th Ave N.
- From North on US 19  
 take 66th Street exit go to  
 126th Ave., turn left.

## FEDERATION NEWS

American Federation of Mineralogical Societies  
 June-July, 2009  
[www.AMFED.org](http://www.AMFED.org)

### 2009-10 Regional Federation Shows & Conventions

**California Federation**  
 June 18-20, 2010  
 TBA

**Rocky Mountain Federation**  
 October 2-3, 2009  
 Roswell, NM

**Eastern Federation**  
 October 17-18, 2009  
 Bristol, CT

**South Central Federation**  
 AFMS

**Midwest Federation**  
 TBA

October 10-11, 2009  
 Temple, TX

**Northwest Federation**  
 TBA

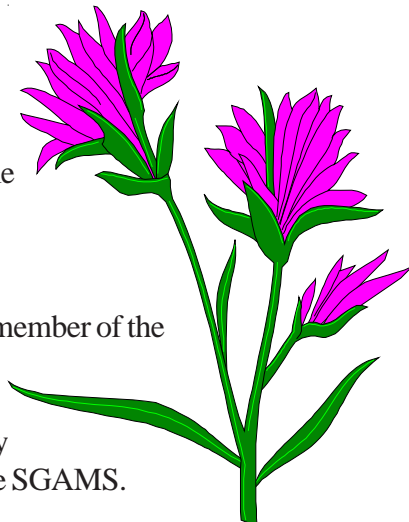
**AFMS Annual Convention**  
 TBA

## Deepest Sympathy

**CARPENTER, Warren A.** 89, of Clearwater, died Saturday, May 23, 2009. He was born in Wisconsin and owned & operated Warren's Lawn Service. Survivors include a son, John, Palm Harbor; 3 daughters, Mary Hatfield, Altavista, VA, Phyllis Hollister, Waxhaw, NC, and Dorothy Lennox, Clearwater; a sister, Fern Mueller, Inver Grove Heights, MN; 11 grand and 4 great-grand-children.

Funeral services were held at the Garden Sanctuary Funeral Home Seminole on Saturday, May 30th.

Warren was a life time member of the Suncoast Gem and Mineral Society. He will be greatly missed by all his friends here at the SGAMS.



## Federation Websites:

- American Federation of Mineralogical Societies**  
[www.amfed.org](http://www.amfed.org)
- Lodestar Newsletter**  
[www.amfed.org/sfms/lodestar\\_newsletter.html](http://www.amfed.org/sfms/lodestar_newsletter.html)
- Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies**  
[www.amfed.org/sfms](http://www.amfed.org/sfms)

## Upcoming Show

**September 18 – 19, Jacksonville, FL** – The Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies, Inc. annual banquet and show. 50th anniversary celebration. Hosted by the Jacksonville Gem & Mineral Society concurrently with their 21st annual gem, mineral jewelry, fossil, bead show and sale September 18th through 20th at the Morocco Temple, 3800 St. Johns Bluff Rd. South, Jacksonville, FL. 32224. For information and registration for the banquet go to: [http://www.amfed.org/sfms/\\_pdf/2009annual-banquet-registration\\_form.pdf](http://www.amfed.org/sfms/_pdf/2009annual-banquet-registration_form.pdf)

## New Members

### Dawn & Dave Bloom

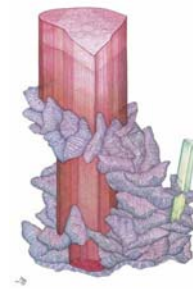
3020 25th Street North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33713  
727-235-2300

[dawnthedaydreamer@yahoo.com](mailto:dawnthedaydreamer@yahoo.com)

### Chuck & Diane Thompson

863 Harbor Hill Drive  
Safety Harbor, FL 34695

[dianet@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:dianet@tampabay.rr.com)



## Club House Classes

The classes listed below are scheduled every week. Whether the class meets or not if it falls on a holiday is at the instructor's discretion. Contact the instructor.

Class	Instructor	Day	Time	Cost
Cabbing, Slabbing, & Gabbing	Bill Schmidt 822-8279	Mon	5-9 PM	\$2.50/hour \$.50/ sq inch Free
Cabbing, Slabbing & Gabbing	Pat Davis 323-2147	Wed	6-9 PM	\$2.50/hour \$.50/ sq inch Free
Faceting	Gil Wegad 323-8800	Sat	10-12 AM	\$65 for 1 <sup>st</sup> stone \$2.50/hour after 1 <sup>st</sup> stone
Silversmithing	Donna Remsnyder 692-6006	Mon	6-8 PM	\$2.50/hour

The classes listed below are scheduled at the convenience of the instructor and student. Contact the instructor to arrange a time.

Gem Trees	Sue Hazelden 321-5732			\$2.50/hour
Wire Wrapping	Sue Black 345-8994			\$2.50/hour
Stained Glass Fused Glass	Julia Larson 522-1254			\$2.50/hour

All classes and shop time are charged at the rate of \$2.50 per hour for the use of the club house. The only exception is the \$65 flat rate for faceting your first stone.

Class materials are the student's responsibility. Instructors frequently have materials available or can direct you to sources. The club has slabs for sale in the cabbing room.

Plans are in the works to have cabbing time on Saturdays. Stay tuned for details as soon as the instructor schedule is finalized.

## "Big Chunk Funk Revisited"

Written by: Don Schough

Exit Interstate 55 at the Shirley, Illinois exit, turn south on McLean County road 41 for 1.6 miles and you enter the world of "Big Chunk Funk". Lafayette Funk II passed away in 1992 but left a legacy for all of us who have even a passing interest in rocks and minerals. On land left in an educational trust stands The Funk Prairie Home and Gem and Mineral Museum. It could easily be the best kept secret in Illinois. Outbuildings on the farm are undergoing extensive restoration but the magnificent old 19th century farm house and the new museum need none.

Funk began collecting at age 53 and actively collected for the next 30 years. In 1968 he split up what museum curator Bill Case calls the "largest collection of minerals in the world", donating one third to Illinois State University and another third to Illinois Wesleyan University, both in Bloomington and retaining the last third of the new museum on the farm property. Whether, "largest" was number or size of specimens might be up for grabs. I'd put my money on the latter. Hard to beat the Smithsonian for sheer numbers. Recently one large quartz crystal was appraised by Dr. Wendy Wolbach of Illinois Wesleyan as being worth a nifty \$15,000 (this article was written in 1996). The crystal was in excess of two feet in length. Funk was the chairman for the 1968 National Show of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies held in Bloomington, IL. His "Hall of

Giants" was one of the main exhibits. The donation of the greater portion of his collection was also part of that show (see Lapidary Journal, July 1971, page 579).

Funk collected large specimens when large was not "in". How many people can house thousands of specimens over 12x12". Funk could and did. In 1974 he built the museum to do just that. The building is 40' by 80' which is faced with some 30 tons of fine North Carolina mica, which gives the building a glow at night under it's security lighting. It is the home of some of the world best and largest crystals. Take, for instance, the 12"x9" teal blue fluorite, a grand display of calcite on fluorite from Cave-in-Rock, IL, which is nearly 2 ft. long and 16" wide. Along with these monsters are large groupings of selenite, wulfenite, and quartz varieties; amethyst, agates, copper minerals, etc.

While large chunks are of great interest, cut materials not overlooked. Funk created a slab wall at the entrance of the museum. The guide/curator Bill Case will allow a good bit of time to examine the rainbow of colors in backlighted agate, wood, ruby in zoisite, amethystine quartz and on and on. The panel is made by gluing slabs to glass and filling the voids with a paste of epoxy and sand.

Another device which shows Funk's imagination as well as his ability to use material at hand, is a set of half doors

which are mounted to one wall showing many grand slabs. A glance will reveal datalite, morrisonte, great petrified woods, owahee canyon jasper and some of the most magnificent Biggs I have ever seen. The varieties on these panels seem endless.

Now if all this is not enough, there is a fossil room just crammed with stuff beyond belief. Included here is a saber tooth cat skull from the Barea Tar pits accessed with the kind permission of the President of the U.S. and the Governor of California. The same kind of "connections" account for Funk's specimen of "moon rock" found elsewhere in the building. Another room contains a monster collection of Indian relics. Here points predominate two walls while celts, axes, spades and grinding tools occupy the remaining space. This is the only material which Funk did not collect but was donated by a close family friend. A small room demonstrated the properties of fluorescence and phosphorescence for visitors.

If you are feeling a little overwhelmed -no wonder. It takes several trips to Funk's museum to really get the feel of this place. The place is open to the public 9-4 Tuesday-Saturday year round. Since it small staffed it is best to call ahead for a tour time. The phone is (309)827-6792. Please don't forget your camera.

**Note:** This article was originally written for a publication in 1996 (never submitted). The hours and phone number are current. The week of June 20th I tried to chase down the portions of the collection which were given to Illinois State and Illinois Wesleyan Universities in Bloomington. I found material in the Natural Sciences Building At Illinois Wesleyan attributed to Funk, but the receptionist at the Mineral Museum at Illinois State didn't even recognize the Funk name.

## Ted's Safety Corner

By: Ted Reith, AFMS Safety Chair

A.F.M.S. Newsletter, June, 2009

### Clean Up Your Act – Safely, Please

The lovely, sparkly, near pristine specimens many of us 'collect' at rock, gem, and mineral shows hardly ever are found in that condition in Nature. Those who collect 'in the wild' will have some cleaning chores in front of them, whether planning to sell those specimens, or add them to a personal collection.

In almost any venture, simple is better than complex, and



less hazard is better than more. However, if you truly know the specimen you have and the nature of the surface contaminant, then by all means use complex cleaning methods with hazardous chemicals (if that is the needed methodology), but do so safely.

An important key to any cleaning is to know your specimen and know its contaminant. This means to know each in terms of Mohs hardness and chemical make-up. Hardness will guide one in mechanical cleaning options, while the chemistry will dictate specific cleaning materials. Cleaning methods, from simple/safe to complex/less safe, may be outlined as follows:

- Soak in or clean under running water, using a bristle brush.
- Same as above, but add a cleaning agent, such as household detergent, to the water. This will help 'wet' the surface contaminant and allow it to be flushed away more readily.
- If appropriate, use a brass brush (Mohs 3.5 – 5) or steel dental pick (harder). This is where knowledge of the base mineral hardness is useful. The tool needs to be harder than the contaminant, but less hard than the base material. Of course, test on an obscure area first to confirm suitability.

One very interesting cleaning option I saw is to use Soft Scrub cleaner (ground calcium carbonate in a detergent base) and a battery powered toothbrush. To give credit, the following link provides an excellent write-up: <[home.page.mac.com/rasprague/PegShop/extras/brush/brush.html](http://home.page.mac.com/rasprague/PegShop/extras/brush/brush.html)>.

Use equipment such as ultrasonic cleaners (good for more fragile specimens) or small sand blasters to remove tough

scale on minerals, while following all manufacturer use and safety recommendations.

Use an acid/water solution for those known, hard-to-remove contaminants. Oxalic acid and hydrochloric (Muriatic) acids are typically used for cleaning of quartz. Both are available in hardware stores. Another useful link for specific procedures using acids is at: <[www.rockhounds.com/rockshop/john\\_betts/clean1.html](http://www.rockhounds.com/rockshop/john_betts/clean1.html)>.

The proper care and handling of acids can be accomplished using applied knowledge. The hazard associated with any acid is a function of the acid type and its concentration (% strength in water). If you put milk on your corn flakes this morning, and used oil & vinegar on your salad for lunch, you just ate two acids. Milk contains lactic acid, and vinegar is a dilute (5%) solution of acetic acid.

Several notes are appropriate regarding the two acids frequently used in mineral cleaning.

**Oxalic Acid:** Though classified as a weak organic acid, it is much stronger than acetic acid. It's primary hazard is skin irritation, with greater hazard if taken internally by mouth or breathing (classified as a poison). Recommended protective equipment includes gloves, apron, goggles, and respirator when used in poorly ventilated areas. Full MSDS info at: <[www.jtbaker.com/msds/englishhtml/o6044.htm](http://www.jtbaker.com/msds/englishhtml/o6044.htm)>.

**Muriatic Acid:** AKA Hydrochloric acid – an extremely strong mineral acid with serious safety concerns. Severe damage can result from tissue or eye contact. Inhaling the fumes or ingestion may be fatal. I've used this myself, but wore butyl rubber gloves and apron, face shield, and used outdoors on a non-windy day to minimize inhalation concerns. Typically available commercially from 20–38% concentration, you MUST add the acid to water if dilution is needed, never add water to acid. MSDS: <[www.jtbaker.com/msds/englishhtml/H3880.htm](http://www.jtbaker.com/msds/englishhtml/H3880.htm)>.

When using any acid, note that spills or solutions remaining after use should be neutralized with an alkaline material. Some fairly common household items to do that would include soda ash, lime, or baking soda. How do you know when you have enough neutralizer? You can use the old high school chem lab stand-by–litmus paper. Or, get some red cabbage at the grocery, and use the juice as an indicator. At pH 2 (acid), it will be red; at pH 12 (alkaline), it will be greenish-yellow. At neutral pH of 7, it's blue.

**Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**September 1, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by President Bill Schmidt. Also present were board members: Dave Watson, Peter Palmer, Dave Schwebel, George Comas, Sue Hazelden, Pat Davis, Donna Remsnyder and Julia Larson. Newsletter editor, Debbie Bremer was also present.

Minutes of the last meeting were approved as published.

**Treasurer's report:** Sue Hazelden read the report. Discussion followed, mostly regarding breakdown of expenses. This will be discussed in more detail in March of next year, when the new budget will be decided. The treasurer's report was accepted for audit.

**Corresponding Secretary:** Dave Schwebel reported two applications for membership. These were tabled until later in the meeting. Bill received ads for the gem calendar. Debbie will post the information in the newsletter.

**Activities committee:** No report

**Holiday Dinner Committee:** No report. [Note: As of September 2, the hall at the Sunshine Center, where last May's dinner was held, has been reserved for the holiday dinner December 17.]

**Audit Committee:** Audit of the past year's reports was discussed and accepted. The treasurer was commended for her attention to detail.

**Building Committee:** Bill discussed improvements made over the summer and mentioned several projects that need to be completed as soon as possible. Volunteers are requested to go through the *Lapidary Journal* library and check for duplicates; to inventory the casting equipment); to sort through the DVD and video collection. Pat and Donna volunteered for some of these activities. The pending appeal of the denial for property tax exemption was discussed. Donna has researched the law and feels there is no way we can qualify. The board voted unanimously to drop the appeal. Sue said the property tax will actually decrease in the coming year.

**Newsletter:** Debbie asked that all items be sent to her no later than Wednesday, September 9. She also asked for a list of classes so she can publish this information.

**Education Committee: The schedule for cabbing classes has changed. Currently, there are NO SATURDAY CLASSES.** Cabbing times are: Monday, 5-9 pm; and Wednesday, 6-9 pm. Other class times are: Faceting (Gil Wegand), Saturday 9-noon; silver and jewelry (Donna), Monday 6-8 pm. Gem trees (Sue Hazelden), beading, and stained and fused glass (Julia) will be scheduled as requested. Instructors need to let Debbie know any changes so she can publish them in the newsletter. Pat also discussed the urgent need for new wheels for the cabbing equipment.

**Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**September 1, 2009** (continued)

**Equipment Committee:** Peter followed up on Pat's request with his request for new saw blades. The merits of both requests were discussed at length. Several board members recommended closer monitoring of those using the equipment to ensure proper techniques are followed. Pat read an email from Don Schlough regarding a phone discussion he had with a saw manufacturer. The guard needs to be screwed down to limit the size of the rock, and the bottom of the rock needs to be flat. If this is not done, the blade will warp (thus the current need for a new blade). Pat addressed the need for wheels, and Donna mentioned she will need a few more things for the silver class. A motion was made that Peter, Pat, Donna and anyone else needing equipment for classes prepare a budget for their needs and submit the budget to the board via email as soon as possible. The board will vote via email prior to the general meeting and announce the purchases to the membership at the meeting. The motion was approved.

**Membership Committee:** Dave Schwebel (filling in for Carmen Lemke, who will not return until November) announced membership applications from **Dawn and Dave Bloom**; and **Diane and Chuck Thompson**. The Thompsons are former members. The applications were discussed and voted in. Donna consulted the by-laws and reminded the board that new members must be approved before they can use the equipment. Dave will notify all new members as soon as the board has voted.

Donna brought up the sale of two extra file cabinets remaining from those she had donated to the club. Members were reminded that any sale of excess equipment needs to be approved by the board before the sale is concluded.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Submitted by:  
*Julia Larson*  
Recording Secretary

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## Rock-A-Gram

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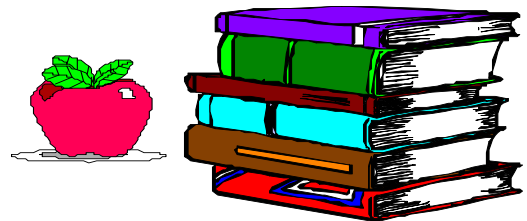
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# September



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		<b>1</b> BOARD MEETING 7:30-9 p.m.	<b>2</b> Cabbing Classes 6-9 p.m.	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Faceting 10-12 a.m.
<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Cabbing 5-9 p.m. Silversmithing 6-8 p.m.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> Cabbing Classes 6-9 p.m.	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Faceting 10-12 a.m.
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Cabbing 5-9 p.m. Silversmithing 6-8 p.m.	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Cabbing Classes 6-9 p.m.	<b>17</b> GENERAL MEETING 7:30-9 p.m.	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Faceting 10-12 a.m.
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Cabbing 5-9 p.m. Silversmithing 6-8 p.m.	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> Cabbing Classes 6-9 p.m.	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Faceting 10-12 a.m.
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Cabbing 5-9 p.m. Silversmithing 6-8 p.m.	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> Cabbing Classes 6-9 p.m.			

# **ROCK-A-GRAM**

*This is the official newsletter of the SUNCOAST GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY, INC.*

*P.O. Box 13254, St. Petersburg, Florida 33733-3254*

This Society is a member of the *SOUTHEAST FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES, INC.*, and its parent society, the *AMERICAN FEDERATION OF MINERALOGICAL SOCIETIES, INC.* The general purpose of this society is to promote popular interest in education and research in the earth sciences and lapidary arts, and to cooperate with other similar organizations.

Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month, September through April at 7:30 p.m., at our clubhouse 4619 69th Street North, St. Petersburg. December and May meetings are special meetings and a time and place will be announced in this bulletin. The public is cordially invited to attend the general membership meetings.

**Dues: \$15.00 single or \$20.00 couple/family; due annually each September**

All exchange bulletins should be sent to the Rock-A-Gram editor.

Feel free to copy any material from this bulletin, but please list all byline credits.

## **ROCK-A-GRAM** (Official Bulletin)

**Suncoast Gem & Mineral Society, Inc.**

*Debra Bremer, Editor*

1349 Lakeview Road

Clearwater, FL 33756

### **Clubhouse Activities September - May**

#### **Board Meeting:**

(September - May)

First Tuesday: 7:30 p.m.

#### **Clubhouse Open:**

Mondays, 5 - 9 p.m.

Wednesdays, 6 - 9 p.m.

Saturday, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

#### **Faceting, Silversmithing**

#### **Wire Wrapping Classes**

By appointment