

Toledo Gem & Rockhound Club

March 2026



Happy Spring! (We hope!)

I've been traveling to Florida, Mississippi and Missouri. Thank you to Jim Nowak for running the club meeting. If you were there, you know we are much closer to getting our 501(c)3 situation remedied. We have the steps identified. But first we need to create a new organization with a slightly changed name. Then we'll apply for the 501(c)3 in the new name and when secured the Board will roll all of the club's assets to the new organization.

Club members discussed the name change. Steve Stalker felt that the word "gem" in our name can attract undesirable attention since it implies we have very valuable stones and may invite criminal interest. Joshua felt "gems" may be intimidating to inexperienced rockhounds since it suggests high-end jewelry. Linda McConahey suggested the word "geological" replace "gem" so we would retain our TGRC acronym. Many members liked that.

The suggestions were, in the order of popularity:
Toledo Geological and Rockhound Club
Toledo Mineral and Rockhound Club
Toledo Rockhound and Lapidary Club
Toledo Gem and Rockhound Club Society

It was explained that we are hoping to get the 501(c)3 designation and new organization set by year's end so we can put the fiscal cycle on a calendar year rotation. Ultimately the name choice is subject to a Board decision.

Our first Show committee meeting will be in March, date and time to be announced. We want to encourage as many members as possible to get involved and choose a specific category to work in and learn. We'll send out an email blast as soon as a date is chosen.

Get involved in your club, you and everyone will benefit!

Jerri Heer
President
419-344-9999
Jheerx6@aol.com

Letter from the President

Birthstones

Modern: **Aquamarine**
Traditional: **Aquamarine**
Alternate: **Bloodstone**
Ancient Hebrew: **Jasper**

If you would like a detailed breakdown, you can check out the following site:

<https://www.gia.edu/birthstones>



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*Going forward, workshops will be held one on one. Please contact the instructor listed to sign up.

Make Your First Pendant- for beginning metal smiths: you will learn how to cut metal, make a bezel and back plate, solder, polish and set a stone in a 2-hr session with one of the Moderators. A fee of \$15 covers the copper, cabochon, soldering and polishing materials needed to complete your pendant. Contact Michelle at Mgrigore tgrh@gmail.com to schedule your session.

*for metal smiths who have satisfactorily completed the pendant session or have previous experience and can demonstrate safe use of the tools and equipment.

Make Your First Cabochon- for beginning gem crafters: you will learn how to use the trim saw, templates, lapidary grinders and polishers to make cut and polish a cabochon. Stop by at the start of an open work session and check in with the Moderator to see if they have time to teach you—plan on at least 1 ½ hrs.

*for gem crafters who have satisfactorily completed the first cabochon session or have previous experience and can demonstrate safe use of the tools and equipment.

Wire Wrapping & Weaving Workshop- Join us for a hands-on wire wrapping and weaving workshop on MAR 21st from 1:00PM to 4:00PM. \$20 per student.

Designed for beginners and those curious about learning wire in a relaxed, supportive studio setting.

In this first session, we'll explore basic tools and wire types, practice foundational techniques, and begin a simple cabochon pendant by learning how wire responds to the stone—rather than forcing a design.

This workshop is not about perfection or finishing quickly. It's about building confidence, understanding materials, and beginning a longer creative journey with wire and stone.

All materials will be provided.

No prior wire-wrapping experience is required. Check in on the Facebook group or calendar during January for the upcoming dates.

Two-day Anodizing Workshop Sat and Sunday, April 11 and 12

Join metalsmith and member Deb Hoffmaster to learn a different way to color metal.. Niobium and titanium may be immersed in an electrolytic bath and charged with a current to create permanent, vibrant colors in a sub-micron thick color layer. This process is called anodizing. In this class you will learn about the process, the equipment necessary to anodize, some techniques to produce different patterns of color and how to set your finished pieces.

Space is limited to 8 students, and you need prior experience using a jeweler's saw to cut complex shapes from metal sheet. Students receive an introductory kit from Reactive Metals that includes a guide to anodizing, several patterned discs and Niobium sheet and wire to create pieces for colorization. Register through moderator Michelle Grigore: mgrigoretgrh@gmail.com. Prepayment of the \$125 fee is due March 15th and there are no refunds if you don't attend due to the upfront material costs."



How far have you travelled to collect rocks in the field? Well, last year Bowling Green State University (BGSU) geologist Katherine “Katie” Shanks travelled all the way to Antarctica as part of a reasearch expedition on volcanos. Katie will share her adventures at the Toledo Gem and Rockhound Club’s monthly meeting on March 18th at 7:00PM.

Volcanoes in the Antartic? Few people realize that some of the most notable volcanoes on earth are under the sea near the South Pole. BGSU Geology Professor Kurt Panter has been researching this topic under a National Science Foundation-funded project. Katie Shanks had the honor of joining that expedition along with two other BGSU Graduate students in February 2025. The team boarded the icebreaking reasearch vessel, the Nathaniel B. Palmer, were joined by other scientists from several nations and stayed aboard for nearly two months studying volcanic activity under the Ross Sea. Katie says she never dreamed she’d have such an opportunity.

As a child in Bowling Green, Katied explained “I always collected rocks. I thought they were so cool.” Then her grandfather took her to visit National Parks out west where she was enamored by the rock formations. “I was always science-oriented and geo-science just clicked,” she remembers. Add to that her 4H Club science focus, a 4H trip to visit the BGSU Geology department, and her rock-strewn path was becoming clear. “When I was young, I remember reading that scientists were about the only people who travelled to the Antarctic. I thought that would be wounderful, but I never thought I’d ever be a scientist, let alone able to go there.”

At first Katie admits, it seemed like a daunting prospect, but with Dr. Panter’s guidance and BGSU’s direction, the opportunity to travel for research became feasible. When the chance became realistic, Katie remembers thinking, “Why not?”

The range or scientific studies being conducted on this expedition was broad.

One focus of this research was to study how climate variables may impact volcanic activity. More immediately, it sought to settle a debate as to whether deposits near the Antartic were volcanic or sedimentary. That meant collecting samples. The challange was that the samples had to be dredged from the ocean bottom. Then there was the ice. “It’s not like we could just go up to a rock outcropping and take samples,” Katie observed. What did they find under the sea? “Lava & pyroclastics. Mantle xenoliths. Deep earth material,” which all verified volcanic origin.

Beyond geo-science, Katie found working with experienced, international scientists rewarding and inspiring. Collective sharing of discoveries and knowledge helps build relationships and connections. And yes, in the future Katie can see herself as an experienced scientist giving guidance to the next generation of young geologists. This month, however, she’ll be sharing her stories with TGRC members and guests.

-Story written by Jim Nowak, TGRC Vice President

GUEST SPEAKER:
Katherine (Katie) Shanks
TITLE: Adventures In Fire
and Ice



Over the warmer days, especially with rain, the roof by the furnace vent pipe leaks into the furnace room. It causes the heat to shut off. There have been large puddles in gemcrafters in front of the furnace room. The landlord's staff have been up on the roof several times trying to fix that leak. Once the furnace dries out, it can be restarted. The saw room has also seen extensive water damage to the ceiling tiles over several events, leading to the total collapse of the ceiling tiles in the area of the leaks.

Michelle has been testing sand casting the last two months to perfect the process and determine which ring dies and metal will work well for a class. Bronze took too long to melt with our acetylene air torches but melted easily in an electric furnace. She is moving on to test a pewter/antimony alloy that is used in belt buckles and rings. This will lower the melting temps needed and hopefully flow more easily in the mold. She hopes to have a good process developed and repeatedly tested by the end of April.

The wire wrapping group has been meeting twice a month since February. Sherm and Erika have been teaching us basic wraps and mentoring students so that everyone has a great end product. We have been focusing on pendants so far. Anyone can join in!

Gemcrafting on Thursday and Saturday have been busy! Good to see people using our resources! Thank you to each of our moderators, they are doing a wonderful job teaching new members.



It's Show Time! Planning for Treasures Unearthed 2026 starts now!

The first planning meeting for Treasures Unearthed 2026 will be on Wednesday, March 18th at 6:00PM, just before our regular monthly Toledo Gem & Rockhound Club (TGRC) meeting. WE NEED YOU to volunteer and help plan for our September 11-12-13 show!

Treasures Unearthed depends upon TGRC Member volunteers. Our philosophy is simple: "If everyone does a little, nobody has to do a lot." Plus, we have updated our latest instruction manual that simply outlines volunteer opportunities and what needs to be done. That keeps it easy.

We've already been busy. Our tasks accomplished so far include:

1. Treasures Unearthed is listed on national rock & gem show event magazine calendars and trade publications, courtesy of Jerri Heer.
2. The Treasures Unearthed promotional postcard has been designed, thanks to Tricia "TJ" Jackson's donation of time & talents, approved and printed.
3. The first "Treasures Unearthed 2026" preview video is now live on our RockyReader.com website.
4. Our promotional postcards are contracted to be in the I-75 rest stops at the Bowling Green exits. They will be there for four months, starting in early May.

We know every event can be better, so we need your help and input to plan and make this year's show the best!

Remember that Treasures Unearthed is the biggest fund-raiser to keep TGRC operating. The more successful the Show is, the better the club can be. Come to our Club Wednesday, March 18th at 6:00PM. If you cannot make it then, contact our Club Vice President, Jim Nowak, to find out what you may do. Jim's contact information is in the Club roster in this newsletter.

TOLEDO GEM & ROCKHOUND CLUB

55th Annual

Toledo Gem & Rockhound Club Show

TREASURES UN-EARTHED

Professional vendors
Live Demonstrations
Jewelry, Crystals,
Mineral Specimens,
Fossils, Beads and More

Mineral ID Table
Scholarship Fund-Raising Raffle
Hourly Door Prizes

Save the date!

SEPTEMBER 11-13, 2026

Board Members

TOLEDO GEM AND ROCKHOUND CLUB BOARD MEMBERS

President

Jerri Heer
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Sunshine Chair

Linda Mcconahey
567-277-8238

MARCH 2026

- Faceting
- Rocky Reader
- Gem Crafters
- Extream Beaders
- Metal Crafters
- Collection/I.D
- Juniors

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Metal Crafters 4-7 Will	2 Gem Crafters 4:30-8:30 Stacy	3 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike	4	5 Gem Crafters 11-3 Michelle	6	7 Metal Crafters 12-3 Mike Gem Crafters 10-3 Sherm
8	9 Gem Crafters 4:30-8:30 Stacy	10 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike	11	12 Gem Crafters 11-3 Mike	13	14 Metal Crafters 12-3 Michelle Juniors 3-4 Stacy Gem Crafters 10-3 Sherm
15 Metal Crafters 4-7 Will Wire Wrapping 1-4 Sherm	16 Gem Crafters 4:30-8:30 Stacy Collection/I.d 6-8 Max	17 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike	18 6:00 PM Show Committee 7:00 PM Monthly Club Meeting	19 Gem Crafters 11-3 Michelle	20	21 Metal Crafters 12-3 Mike Gem Crafters 10-3 Sherm Wire Wrapping 11-3 Erika
22	23 Gem Crafters 12-8 Stacy	24 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike	25	26 Gem Crafters 11-3 Mike	27	28 Metal Crafters 12-3 Michelle Gem Crafters 10-3 Sherm
29 Metal Crafters 4-7 Will	30 Gem Crafters 12-8 Stacy	31 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike				

APRIL 2026

- Faceting
- Rocky Reader
- Gem Crafters
- Extream Beaders
- Metal Crafters
- Collection/I.D
- Juniors

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Gem Crafters 11-3 Michelle	3	4 PM Metal Crafters 12-3 Mike Gem Crafters 10-3 Sherm
5 Wire Wrapping 1-4 Sherm	6 Gem Crafters 4:30-8 Stacy	7 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike	8	9 Gem Crafters 11-3 Mike	10	11 Gem Crafters 10-3 Sherm Juniors 3-4 Stacy
12 Metal Crafters 4-7 Will	13 Collection/I.d 6-8 Max Gem Crafters 4:30-8 Stacy	14 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike	15 7:00 PM Monthly Club Meeting	16 Gem Crafters 11-3 Michelle	17	18 Metal Crafters 12-3 Mike Gem Crafters 10-3 Sherm Wire Wrapping 11-4 Erica
19	20 Gem Crafters 4:30-8 Stacy	21 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike	22	23 Gem Crafters 11-3 Mike	24	25 Metal Crafters 12-3 Michelle Gem Crafters 10-3 Sherm
26 Metal Crafters 4-7 Will	27 Gem Crafters 4:30-8 Stacy	28 Extream Beaders 10-2 Metal Crafters 3-7 Mike	29	30 Gem Crafters 11-3 Mike		