

 JOIN US FOR THE MAY GENERAL MEETING
ON ZOOM — FRIDAY MAY 2ND AT 7 PM

*“Living With Fire – Art As Artifacts
from Our Rapidly Changing World”
with Andrea (Aundi) Taylor*



Dear members and friends of the San Francisco Gem and Mineral Society:
You are cordially invited to our May 2025 First Friday Meeting on Zoom.

Club Member Andrea (Aundi) Taylor is an interdisciplinary artist who has just completed her MFA project entitled **Living With Fire, Adapting to a Changing World**. In this talk, Aundi will take us on a journey of shock, mourning, reawakening, and hope by sharing her body of work resulting from 3 years of artistic research, interviews, and visiting various Northern California wildland fire burn scars.

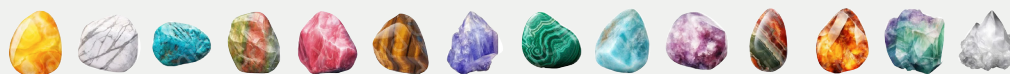
Not unlike rockhounds sourcing specimens from various sites, Aundi visited numerous megafire sites that have burned within recent years to collect stories, photos, videos, and occasionally harvest charred wood to create her reimagined forest series, a set of sculptures from burnt wood and copper utility wire.

She also created a series of jewelry pieces as wearable totems invoking what rises from the ashes after the devastation has whipped through the forest. In the second half of the talk, we will engage in discussion on “What living with fire means to us” after viewing her award-winning experimental video short, **Beyond Us** that depicts the power and devastation experienced from Shasta County’s 2018 Carr Fire.

Aundi’s photos, sculptures and video works will be on display at the **Frank Bette Center** in Alameda, June 6th-29th with an opening reception on Saturday June 14th from 3-5 pm.

Register in advance for this meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/d7_0U1xBSSieygM8ffiPrg



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Part 158

Masthead by Kevin Anderson

Beware The Red Seed

At my favorite cafe a few blocks from my house besides food they have lots of lovely indoor plants sitting around for sale. Really lovely plants, but what annoys me are the labels, which say “Live Plant” that’s it, just “Live Plant.” When I buy a plant I not only want the common name, but the scientific name too. I want to know what it is and how to care for it. Imagine buying rocks and minerals for your collection and telling your friends, “Uh, these are rocks...”

Some years ago I was attending a party at our club, and I overheard someone across the isle discussing a bead bracelet another women was wearing. She mentioned that it was supposed to be poisonous. That got me really interested, so I yelled, “Hey, can I see that thing?” They brought it over and I yelled, “Oh my God, that’s *Abrus Precatorius!*”

Also known as the Rosary Pea, Jequirity, Crab’s eye, Prayer Bead, Coral Bead, Indian Licorice, Jumbie Bead, Gidee Gidee... The names go on and on. It’s the source of one of the worst natural poisons in the world. I proceeded to tell them about the plant, it’s original source in India, the toxin “Abrim,” and how this invasive plant has traveled through our world.

The person sitting on the other side of the table from me looked a little pale and said, “I want to know HOW she knows this!”

A few minutes later I heard someone from the back of the room tell another person, “Oh, Mary Sue is a professional botanist.” Pretty soon this statement was spread around the room, and just like that...I had a degree in botany. Oh, how myths are born...

No, I’m not a botanist, even though you may have heard me carry on about my collection of *Streptocarpus* plants. Beware, I’ve been known to whip out my phone, corner an unwary victim, and show photo after photo of my beloved *Streps*.

Back to the *Abrus Precatorius*. I learned about this species when studying about beads. The seeds are usually bright fiery red with a black spot at the end, and are strung to make jewelry, but they also use large brown ones like that bracelet the woman was wearing at the party. They pierce them with a sharp object and string them for necklaces and bracelets. Swallowing the seeds need not be fatal, they have a semi-hard shell, but chew it a bit and one tiny seed brings days of suffering and then...a painful death. I’ve read that it’s more potent and horrible than the *Amanita* mushroom, the “Destroying Angel.”

This a widely used “bead” in tropical countries. The plant, a member of the pea and bean family grows everywhere where it’s warm. It’s native to Asia, but birds, which are not effected by the toxin, have carried it to South America in their guts, then up the continent, and into our southern states. Like Kudzu...

Accidents have happened. Imagine a grandmother wearing a necklace of *Abrus Precatorius* seeds while holding a child. Child chews on the necklace...one less kid. It has been said that this seed is so toxic that if a person pierces the seed to string it, and then pokes a finger with that needle...death. I don’t know if that’s true, but it makes a great story.

Some years ago, I found many of these seeds for sale on Ebay and they were touted for “Mental Health.” Huh? They never explained that, but a little research tells us that among “alternative medicine systems” such as Ayurveda from East India, it’s recommended for a great many ailments. If it doesn’t work, a little more research explained that the most common use is suicide. That sounds more likely.

When I recently looked for them on Ebay and Etsy, they can still be found in the form of jewelry, and even loose and unstrung. But, I don’t see them recommended for alternative medicine anymore. However, research I’d done some years ago said that when cooked, the toxin was minimized and they used them for “tranquilizers” for children.

As I say again and again...people are crazy.



Club Scenes: April 13th Open House

Photos courtesy of Tony DeLeon



Folks get an early start to the April Open House. Mary Sue follows a trail of bubbles to the clubhouse. Gem Miner Ian Snyder at the April 5th Sale - in love with our jade clock. Kris, Kirk and Dragonfly at the new Sunset Dunes sign making a note: something is missing!



Instructors Request: Please Wear Badges when in the Clubhouse

Our Instructors Team requests that all members wear their name badge when in the clubhouse. The good news is that we have been getting many new members at our open houses. Wearing your name badge helps instructors to see that you are a member and to get to know you. Please ask instructors how to watch our safety videos and how they can help you get started on a project.

Clubhouse 90th Year Celebration – Time to put on a show!

by Tony DeLeon, Show Committee Chair



To celebrate the club's ninetieth year, it's the board's vision to have an extended celebration during the first 3 weeks of August with special events during the first 3 weekends. This is a chance to show off our club and raise awareness of what we do for the community.

We are planning to dust off 6 to 8 show cases from previous shows and invite members to populate them with their best work. We would love to see class projects from the lapidary and metalsmithing sessions.

We also invite pieces to be donated to the club so that members and the public can bid on these items with the funds raised benefitting the club. As a reminder, our club is a 501c3 non-profit.

The scheduled dates are August 1-3, 8-10, and 15-17. Be a part of this celebration by joining the show committee. Please contact me at tonythetm@aol.com if you want to be part of the planning committee or want to have items displayed.

Commemorative 90th Anniversary Enamel Pin Available Now!



Designed by a SFGMS member and produced in a limited quantity of 250, this high-quality soft enamel pin is the perfect addition to your backpack, jean jacket, apron, or just about anything else where you want to show off your SFGMS pride. Buy yours at the clubhouse during the May Open House on May 10th, from 11 am – 3 pm.

Pin purchases also come with a sticker of the same design!
(At this time, we are unable to mail pins/stickers.)

NEW CLASS ANNOUNCEMENT

New and Existing Members asked to attend: **“Club Introduction 101”** **Essential Shop Skills & Safety**

4th Monday Every Month; 7-10 pm

***** BEGINS JUNE 23RD, 2025 *****

Learn what is required to use the shop, review shop rules, and get a basic introduction.

Local Upcoming Events of Interest to Club Members:

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies 2025 Convention

05/09/2025 - 05/11/2025

This event features exhibits, Cracker Barrel with a Silent Auction and a banquet for attendees. Don't miss this chance to connect with fellow rockhounds and mineral enthusiasts!

Venue: Antelope Valley Fairgrounds, Lancaster, CA
2551 West Avenue H, Lancaster, CA 93536

Website: <https://cfmsinc.org>

Nevada Co. Gem & Mineral, Grass Valley Tailgate Show 05/17/2025

Second Annual Tailgate Show. Parking spots to sell are \$25 (cash), free admission, anything rock-related beyond minerals and jewelry allowed (even art, plants, equipment, etc. all fine!) Additional spaces to sell \$20. Just come early, 7-ish, pick your spot. Blaze will be there midmorning to collect for the Grange. Contact: oominerals@gmail.com.

Hours: Sat 8 a.m.- Late Afternoon.

At the Banner Grange parking lot, (12629 McCourtney Rd., Grass Valley, CA 95945) just 1 mile past the Nevada County Fairgrounds.

Website: <https://cfmsinc.org/shows-2>

Julian Memorial Day Weekend Gems, Minerals & Crafts Show

05/24/2025 - 05/26/2025

Local artists, crafts, gifts, 20+ retail dealers and vendors, Fine minerals, gems, crystals, slab, rough, lapidary items, handmade jewelry, Raffles.

Hours: Sat & Sun 10:00-6:00 Mon 10:00-5:00

Venue: Julian Town Hall, 2129 Main Street, Julian, CA 92036

Website: <https://visitjulian.com/julian-rocks-gem-show>

San Francisco Crystal Fair

06/07/2025 - 06/08/2025

Hours: Sat 10:00-6:00 Sun 10:00-4:00

Venue: San Francisco County Fair Building

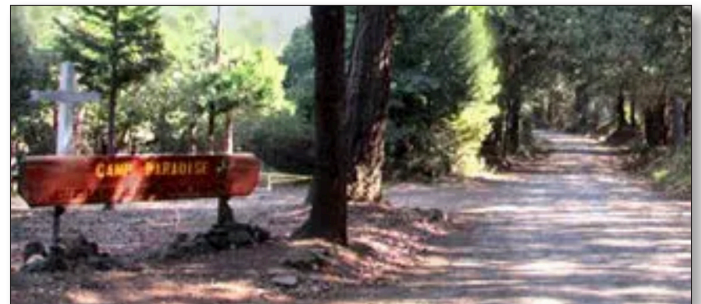
1199 9th Ave - Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94122

Website: <https://www.crystalfair.com/crystal-fair-shows>

California Federation of Mineralogical Societies Camp Paradise 2025

Camp Paradise registration opened March 15, 2025.

The camp takes place in the Plumas National Forest near Clipper Mills, California. The week long camp sessions feature experiential learning about new jewelry and lapidary techniques.



Camp dates this year are August 17-23 & August 24-30; cost is \$550 per person, per week. You can find everything at CFMSinc.org. Scroll down to Camp Paradise and click on it. Registration and payment will be online.

Speaking of new lapidary techniques, this year there will be a new intarsia program with some brand-new intarsia machines! The instructor just returned from Tampa Bay, Florida where she learned about a technique called Cobblestone Inlay, taught by Caitlin Albritton. She will also teach introductory intarsia but is working toward developing some advanced options.

<https://cfmsinc.org/camp-paradise>



CLUBHOUSE WEEKLY SCHEDULE

PLEASE BE SURE TO CALL THE CLUBHOUSE (415-564-4230) BEFORE TRAVELING.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
10 AM - 3 PM Lapidary, Silversmithing	10 AM - 1 PM Lapidary	9 AM - 10 PM Lapidary, Silversmithing, Spheremaking	9 AM - Noon Lapidary	10 AM -3 PM Spheremaking	PLEASE CALL FIRST FOR ANY OPEN HOURS	10 AM - 5 PM Lapidary, Silversmithing, Spheremaking
	6 PM - 9 PM Lapidary	7 PM - 10 PM Lapidary	6 PM - 9 PM Lapidary, Faceting	3 PM - 6 PM Goldsmithing		6 PM - 9 PM Gem Carving

SPECIAL DATES IN MAY :

- **First Friday Clubhouse Meeting on Zoom**
 featuring Andrea Taylor • May 2nd, Friday • 7:00 pm

- **In-Person Instructors Meeting at the Clubhouse with Zoom Option** • May 11th, **(Note) Sunday** • 11:00 am

- **SF Gem & Mineral Society Club Fair & Open House**
 May 11th, Sunday • 10:00 am - 3:00 pm
Contact Tony to reserve a spot: tonythetm@aol.com

- **Board Meeting on Zoom***
 May 12th, Monday Night • 7:00 pm
**Zoom -Info: tonythetm@aol.com*

- **Mineralog June 2025 Submissions Deadline**
 May 14th, Wednesday • 5:00 pm



CLUB BIRTHDAYS IN MAY

Note: Exact birth "DATES" are not shared to protect privacy.

- | | |
|--|---|
| Adam Blumberg
Adrian Wong
Andrew Stunm
Andrew Werby
Angel Canizal
Arleen Hoffman
Bob Kozak
Carlos Sandoval
Charity Liah
Cheryl Hendricson
Christina Badasow
Christina Liu
Connor Call
Corey Petersen
David Giulietti
David Kirkbride
David Hone
Dmitri Yevstifeev
Elise Gordillo
Eric Griswold
Eric Liebau
Francisco Viveros
Jasper Yao
John Hoskins
Joseph Kilmon-Huff
Jsamyn Wimmer
Katherine Dunham | Keeley Rideout
Ken Jacobsen
Lindsay Hatfield
Madeline Mao
Maia Sanders
Marcia Kawabata
Marco Over
Marion Bell
Martha Kirchhoff
Mary White
Mary Hanowsky
Michael Seidel
Michael Loo
Nancy Lerer
Nora Hemm
Patsy Durr
Peter Wiley
River Nix
Rob Rothfarb
Rob Long
Robert Courtney
Roni Michaels
Sai He
Scott Seiwald
Suki Smith
Tatiana Gay
Yolanda Yeb |
|--|---|

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS FROM APRIL:

- | | |
|---|--|
| Alex Godbout
Frank Reyes
Kathryn Kelly
Keeley Rideout
Snelha Ojha | Nicholas Lerch
(and son) Max
Stella Cook
Will Douglas |
|---|--|



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To add, update or change a calendar event, please contact mineralog@protonmail.com

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THE MINERALOG

We are always grateful for editorial and photographic submissions, especially from our members.

To contribute content, submit story or calendar additions, updates or corrections, please email the Editor: mineralog@protonmail.com

Deadline for **June** Mineralog is 5:00 PM **Wednesday, May. 14th**

Any submissions or changes received after the deadline will automatically be included in the following month's Mineralog.

Original material published in the Mineralog that is not copyrighted may be reprinted with all due and proper credits.

For Membership Info, contact the Membership Secretary: tonythetm@aol.com

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415-564-4230 • WWW.SF-GMS.ORG

Membership Activities Include:

Earth Sciences, Lapidary, Field Trips, Collecting, Jewelry Making, Classes

An Educational Non-Profit Organization Founded in 1935

Member, California Federation of Mineralogical Societies and American Federation of Mineralogical Societies