

## Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies Workshops

[sfmsworkshops.com](http://sfmsworkshops.com)

The SFMS Workshop classes are open to all SFMS members, all AMFED Federation members and anyone from the general public that is willing to join a gem club - either a local one to them or one we provide to them. All members of The Villages Gem & Mineral Society are also members of SFMS.

Gem, Jewelry and Mineral workshops are held at Wildacres, near Little Switzerland in North Carolina, and at the William Holland Retreat near the small town of Young Harris in northeast Georgia. Both facilities offer double accommodations with a private bath. Twin bed rooms and a number of rooms with a double bed and a twin bed arrangement are available.

A broad range of courses related to the lapidary arts are taught by qualified instructors from throughout the Federation. All instructors are volunteers who are not paid for the highly skilled and professional experience that they bring to the workshops.

The workshops are well equipped for common lapidary activities such as cabochon cutting, faceting, and silversmithing. Additional equipment is brought in when new or special courses are taught.

### Wildacres Retreat

1565 Wildacres Rd, Little Switzerland, NC 28749  
828 756 4573      [wildacres.org](http://wildacres.org)

Wildacres Retreat, Conference Center is a conference center offering its facilities to non-profit groups conducting educational or cultural programs on topics such as music, art, science, religion, lapidary, craft and writing. At an elevation of 3,300 feet, Wildacres is situated on 1,600 acres atop Pompey's Knob, a mountain near the Blue Ridge Parkway in Little Switzerland, North Carolina.

**Conference center facilities** at Wildacres Retreat include indoor meeting spaces of various sizes; a 165 seat indoor auditorium for lectures and concerts; a 200 seat amphitheater for outdoor gatherings; a fully equipped lapidary workshop and pottery studio; a dining hall serving three family style meals daily; and 57 double-occupancy bedrooms, each with a private bath.



## SFMS WORKSHOPS (Continued)

### William Holland School of Lapidary Arts

230 Lapidary Ln, Young Harris, GA 30582  
706 379 2126      lapidaryschool.org

The William Holland School of Lapidary Arts is situated on a mountain in north Georgia near the North Carolina border. It is a Rockhound's Dream come true. Here, near Young Harris College, is a special school that is like no other in the United States. The serious Rockhound can learn how to turn rough gems into family keepsakes. With dedication and determination, an inspired group of hobbyists is making it possible for many others to enjoy the fruits of their knowledge.



The lapidary arts include all the skills that are required to make custom jewelry. At the William Holland School of Lapidary Arts, classes are taught by volunteer instructors in such procedures as faceting, silversmithing, the making of cabochons, wire crafting, wax modeling and casting, bead knotting and design, and opal cutting. Some weeks also include chain making, stained glass, basket making, and copper tooling. Gem and mineral identification classes are also offered. Students learn to use all the special tools and shop safety is stressed. Each student carries home the fruits of his or her efforts as well as fond memories of new acquaintances.



The facilities include a main building (lodge) of two stories whose upper ground floor is like a motel with 29 bedrooms, each with a private bath and two beds, one double and one twin. Two bedrooms are equipped for the handicapped. The lower ground level contains 13 classrooms, the kitchen, and dining room. Each bedroom has a ceiling fan and air-conditioning. A separate building, the Seabolt Building, houses the George Kasper Memorial Library. This building also has facilities for a campground with 10 spaces with full hookups.

The school is operated from April through October with certain weeks being set aside for special workshops sponsored by and for members of the Southeast Federation. All rockhounds are eligible to participate during the remainder of the season. Classes are of one week duration, and the courses vary during the time the school is in operation. A student takes one class for the week.



The workshop week begins on Sunday with check-in after 3:00 p.m.; dinner is at 6:00 p.m. Classes start at 9:00 a.m. on Monday. Tuesday night is generally scheduled for an auction with items donated by students and instructors. Proceeds go into classroom equipment and supplies.