



# THE POLISHED SLAB

## SOUTHERN NEVADA GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY



February 2025

A NEWSLETTER FOR ROCKHOUNDS SINCE 1940

VOLUME 85 ISSUE 02

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

**March 3, 2025 - Board Mtg**  
**March 3, 2025 – Genl Mtg**

**SNGMS Contacts:**

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**Sunshine Report Volunteer Needed**

**Contact Orville Wiemers for details**

**sngmspresident@gmail.com**  
or

**702-743-3277**

Greetings-

Getting ready for rock hounding season is always an exciting part of the hobby. Where to go, when to go and avoid weather trends, and the excitement of maybe finding that one beautiful rock or gem. You know, the one with just the right color and pattern to make that one of a kind piece.

The SNGMS has a schedule of events that allow you to go on excursions to sites to dig up a rock (see page 2 of this newsletter). Some are in the public domain and some are fee digs. If you don't really want to dig it up yourself, the club has opportunities to shop and purchase raw material and slabs. Check the schedule every month in the Polished Slab newsletter for SNGMS sponsored opportunities (for example, SNGMS BBQ and rock swap on February 22, 2025, Parking Lot Spring Sale March 8, 2025, Spring Jamboree May 3 – 4, 2025, fall Parking Lot Sale date TBD, Viva Las Vegas Rocks show date TBD).

So now you have either purchased or dug up that "treasure", the next big question is "What now, what do I do with it?" The SNGMS has put together a program to help answer that dilemma. Amber Palecek is offering a program to take it from a rock straight out of the ground to a finished product. All of the tools are at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop to cut, trim, shape, and polish your new find. Once you have polished it up and made it ready for mounting, we have classes for wire wrapping, beading, faceting, silver smithing, and resin so you can learn to make necklaces, earrings, pendants, rings, or even a decoration on a clock.

All members are encouraged to jump right in and get involved in this exciting opportunity, whether you are just joining, been here a year or so and want to get started, or have been a member for a while and want to learn more. If you are interested please email me at sngmspresident@gmail.com or contact Amber Palecek at 702-343-7150.

ROCK ON!!

Orville Wiemers  
SNGMS President

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2025 Field Trips<sup>1</sup> & Events

Field Trip <sup>1</sup> /Event	Date	Location
SNGMS BBQ and rock swap. Bring a side dish to share. Drinks available for purchase.	February 22, 2025 10 am – 2 pm.	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>2</sup>
Parking Lot Sale <sup>3</sup>	March 8, 2025	Desert Art Supplies 2750 N Green Valley Pky Suite D Henderson NV 89014
Pacific Diamond Collection – <i>minimum</i> 20 people, \$3/lb for rocks & Mojave Desert Gem & Mineral Society rock yard	March 22, 2025	2620 Main St., Barstow, CA, 92311 for Diamond Pacific; Yermo, CA for MDGMS Rock Yard
Red and white travertine, onyx with quartz	April 5, 2025	Rhyolite, NV and Armargosa Valley, NV
Boulder City Spring Jamboree	May 3- 4, 2025	Bicentennial Park, 999 Colorado St, Boulder City, NV 89005
California Federation of Mineralogical Societies Convention	May 10 -11, 2025	Lancaster, CA
Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies Convention	September 19 – 21, 2025	Grand Junction, CO
Awards Banquet	Dec 7, 2025	Santa Fe Station Casino, Las Vegas, NV

1) Field trip destinations, dates, and times are subject to change. Contact Jonathan Tredwell (sngmsfieldtrip@gmail.com)

2) 3111 South Valley View Blvd, Bldg E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102

3) Contact Del Walkenshaw (702-451-8040 or desertartssupply@aol.com)

Some links with information you may find helpful:

American Federation Of Mineralogical Societies – [www.amfed.org/whatsnew.htm](http://www.amfed.org/whatsnew.htm)

Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies – [www.rmfmts.org](http://www.rmfmts.org)

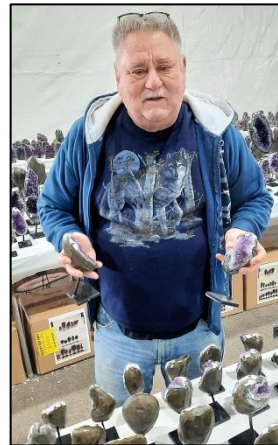
Rock & Gem Magazine website – [www.rockngem.com](http://www.rockngem.com)



Left to right:  
Amethyst and Citrine at  
Quartzsite, AZ  
Photo courtesy of  
Barb Maz



Who is Older?  
Ron Mazz and a Fossil Friend, Quartzsite, AZ  
Photo and caption courtesy of  
Barb Maz



Chops Wenzl  
Shopping at  
Quartzsite, AZ  
Photo courtesy of  
Barb Maz



Left to right:  
Ron Maz, Jason Fabbri, and  
Aubrey Williams  
Quartzsite, AZ  
Photo courtesy of Barb Maz

Left to right:  
Ron Mazz, Barb Mazz, Sara and  
Jonathon Tredwell  
at Quartzsite, AZ  
Photo courtesy of  
Barb Maz



## SNGMS Board Meeting Minutes for 2/3/2025

On February 3, 2025, the regular Board of Directors meeting of the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society was called to order at the Eagles' Lodge at 4:00 PM by the President. The Past President was absent for health reasons. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was recited.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the January 6th, 2025, meeting were approved as read.

**Unfinished Business:**

**Treasurers Report:** Balance of the checking account as of January 31, 2025 was \$16,639, a decrease of \$899 from the previous month. The investments balance is \$128,077. There was a meeting about finances at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop. The Treasurer requested and received permission to transfer approximately \$8,400 from the brokerage account to the checking account to prepare for upcoming expenses. If membership approves, a deposit must be made for the Awards Banquet to receive the most favorable pricing.

**SNGMS Lapidary Shop Report:** There are no issues to report for the Shop. A Supervisor/Engineer/Class Instructor meeting was held in January.

**2025 Jamboree Show:** Orville Wiemers reported seven booths remain to be sold. We are waiting on paperwork and payment from seven early birds due by March 15, 2025 and five signed up vendors. Approximately \$3,730 has been collected including early bird deposits placed last year.

**New Business:**

Chops Wenzl proposed, seconded by David Ford and approved by the Board that "up to \$300 be spent acquiring additional materials for show silent auctions, and raffle"

David Ford proposed, seconded by Bob Belcher and approved by the Board that "a proposal of up to \$8,000 deposit for Awards Banquet be presented to the membership."

David Ford proposed, seconded by Bob Belcher and approved by the Board that "a revised 2025 Viva Las Vegas Rocks Show budget of \$30,000 and the spending plan be presented to membership for approval."

A new category of dues for college students was discussed and was tabled due to the complications brought up.

A Parking Lot Sale will be held on March 8, 2025 in the Desert Art Supplies parking lot in Henderson. All booths are sold.

A Rock Swap and BBQ at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop will be held on February 22, 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 PM.

**Start To Finish With Rocks**

You know - "Now that I have this rock - what do I do with it?" Here are some ideas...

- 1) Go on a field trip or outing to collect rough rocks . The SNGMGS Ore Car Mine is a good spot (free, <https://www.sngmgs.org/sngmsminingclaim>), or you can go on a field trip (see page 2 of this newsletter).
- 2) Attend shop orientation (\$10, see page 10 of this newsletter)
- 3) Cut and slab your rough rock at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop with the help of a supervisor. (Shop hourly fee is \$6.00 per hour).
- 4) Make a cabochon with the help of a SNGMS Lapidary Shop supervisor or by taking a cabochon class (see class schedule on page 15 of this newsletter).
- 5) Make a setting for your cabochon using beading, wire wrapping, or silver smithing techniques (see class schedule on page 15 of this newsletter).
- 6) Show off your new piece at a general meeting (if you want to)!



## SNGMS General Meeting Minutes for 2/3/2025

### SNGMS General meeting minutes for 2/3/2025

On February 3, 2025 the regular meeting of the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society was called to order at 6:03 PM by the President. The Secretary was present. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was recited. New members and visitors were introduced and welcomed. Tables with show and tell items were pointed out so that attendees could enjoy them. Thomas Boes was introduced as our new Audio Video tech. and Tyra Tripp as the new Entry Hostess. The minutes of the January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025 meeting were approved as corrected.

#### Old Business:

**Treasurers Report:** Balance of the checking account as of January 31<sup>st</sup> was \$16,639, a decrease of \$899 from the previous month. The investments balance is \$128,077. There was a meeting about finances at the Shop.

**Jamboree Update:** Orville Wiemers reported on the 2025 Jamboree Show. Seven vendor booths remain to be sold. We are waiting on paperwork and payment from early birds, which is due by March 15, 2025 and five signed up vendors. Approximately \$3,730 has been collected including early bird deposits placed last year.

**Kids Club Report:** Wendy Dresser reported on the Kid's Club activities and said thanks to everyone that helped or donated to the Club. A trip to Trilobite Hill is planned this month. The Club will meet to work on their Rocks and Mineral Merit Badge in March. Volunteers are needed to help the Kids Club at the Jamboree.

**SNGMS Lapidary Shop Report:** Chops Wenzl reported that the SNGMS Lapidary Shop is in good shape. Specimens were purchased at the Tucson Gem & Mineral Show for SNGMS use.

**Awards Banquet:** Wendy Dresser proposed, seconded by Lloyd Chayette, and accepted by the membership that "the deposit be made to Station Casino for the Awards Banquet."

**Federation:** Mary Beth Paladino says that Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies is looking for volunteer written article for the newsletter.

**Sunshine Report:** Mary Beth Paladino shared news from membership. The Sunshine report is available in the Polished Slab.

**Cabochon Contest:** First place – James Sloan, Second Place – Tie between Lloyd Chayette and George Stewart

**Viva Las Vegas Rocks Show:** Orville Wiemers reported attendance was down in 2024 but the SNGMS made \$3,867.33 profit. Amber Palecek proposed, seconded by Debbie Bucknam, and accepted by the membership that "a \$30,000 budget be approved for the 2025 Viva Las Vegas Rocks Show."

**Field Trip Report:** Jonathan Tredwell reported on upcoming field trips. See the Polished Slab and emails for future field trip plans.

**Future Events :** There will be a Parking Lot Sale May 8, 2025 at Desert Arts Supply in Henderson, NV from 9 am – 4 pm. There will be a SNGMS Rock Swap and BBQ at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop on Saturday, February 22, 2025 from 10 am to 2 pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 PM.



# Sunshine Report

from Mary Beth Paladino



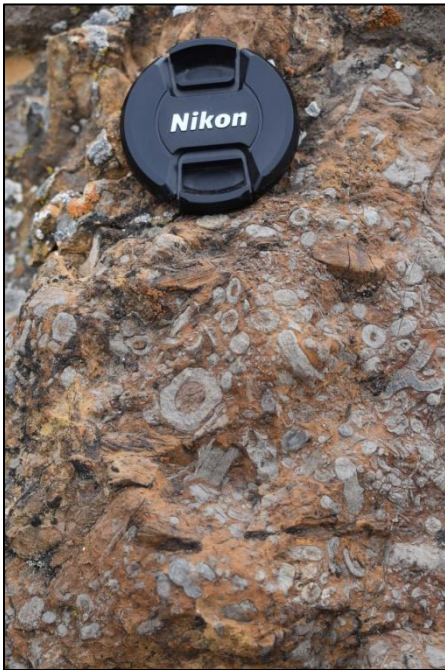
If you hear of any SNGMS member with an event to celebrate (wedding, anniversary, etc.) or who is in need of a bit of sunshine due to accident, illness, etc., please contact Mary Beth Paladino at 702-255-1647.

Linda Martin is recovering from surgery. Susan Keller is in the hospital. Ken Bucknam is slated for surgery. Jim Jones- is in hospice care. Ann Harris' health is improving. Scott Palka is in the hospital.

## Fossil Focus Sponges

Sponges have been around for a very long time. Their fossil record dates back about 600 million years to the earliest (Precambrian) period of Earth's history. Sponges are filter feeders that pump water through their bodies to obtain food and oxygen, and to remove waste. Simple sponges are hollow cylinders with an opening at the top. A thin, outer layer with holes covers a porous skeleton. Sponges range from inches to feet tall. They may be shaped like fingers or vases (elongate sponges), trees, or blobs (spherical sponges).

Elongate and spherical sponges were common in the ancient seas that once covered the Las Vegas area. Sponge fossils are common in the limestone mountains around Las Vegas. You can see them along Fossil Canyon Trail in Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.



**Fossilized Reef in Esmeralda Co., NV**  
<https://hakaimagazine.com/news/hidden-on-a-mountain-in-the-desert-signs-of-the-worlds-first-reefs/>



**Fossilized Elongate Sponges, Clark Co., NV**  
[www.birdandhike.com/Rocks/Fossils/sponge/\\_sponge.htm](http://www.birdandhike.com/Rocks/Fossils/sponge/_sponge.htm)



**Fossilized Spherical Sponge, Clark Co., NV**  
[www.birdandhike.com/Rocks/Fossils/sponge/\\_sponge.htm](http://www.birdandhike.com/Rocks/Fossils/sponge/_sponge.htm)



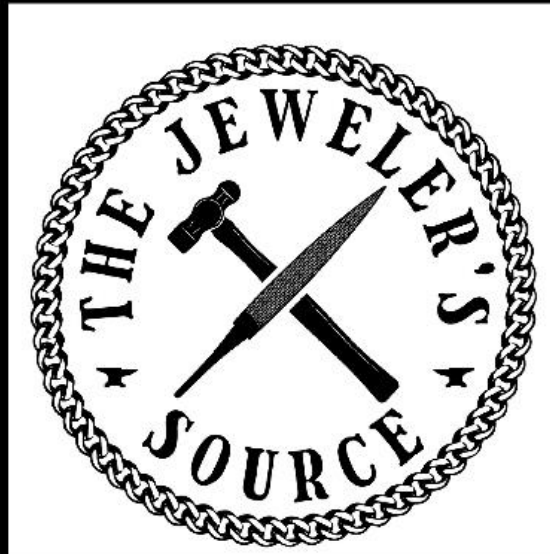
**Fossilized Sponge Gold Point, NV**  
<https://inyo.coffeecup.com/site/gp/gparcheocyathids2.html>

Fossilized sponge reefs have been found about five miles northeast of Gold Point, Nevada in Esmeralda County. The reefs were relatively short lived, lasting about 20 million years, a mere blip in geologic history.

Within the fossilized remains, there is evidence of an abrupt change in the climate. By around 515 million years ago, a large slab of ancestral North America (Laurentia) split off from a supercontinent, spewing massive amounts of carbon into the atmosphere. The carbon combined with oxygen from the oceans and acidified the water, killing the sponges. This is similar to the changes in ocean chemistry today that is causing the decline of modern coral reefs.

The fossilized Gold Point reef is similar to a modern reef, but it would not have been for great snorkeling. Because the ancient reef was close to shore and extremely shallow, it would have been swamped by nutrients and sediment washing in from the coast. It was probably murky, with less activity than modern reefs.





Members Receive 5% Off

- **JEWELRY SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT**
- **JEWELRY FINDINGS & METALS**
- **LAPIDARY EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES**
- **JEWELRY WORKSHOPS**

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SNGMS Meeting Schedules and Lapidary Shop Hours

SNGMS 2025 Meeting Schedule		
Board Meeting <sup>1</sup>	General Meeting <sup>2</sup>	Kids Club Meeting <sup>3</sup>
Mar 3	Mar 3	Mar 9
Apr 7	Apr 7	Apr 13 – Field Trip TBA
May 5	May 5	May 11 – <b>NO MEETING</b>
Jun 2	Jun 2	Jun 8
Jul 7	Jul 7	Jul 13 – Field Trip TBA
Aug 4	Aug 4	Aug 10
Sep 8	Sep 8	Sep 14
Oct 6	Oct 6	Oct 12 – Field Trip TBA
Nov 3	Nov 3	Nov 16
Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet

Due to limited staffing of the SNGMS Lapidary Shop on Sundays, shop users are asked to help keep the trash emptied and the floor mopped

- 1) Meets at Eagles’ Lodge, 4 pm, before the general meeting
- 2) Meets at Eagles’ Lodge 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month, unless there’s a holiday, open to the public. Show & Sell 5-6 pm, meeting 6-8 pm
- 3) Meets at SNGMS Lapidary Shop with exception of some field trips, membership required. Details on page 11.

Location of the SNGMS Lapidary Shop

The SNGMS Lapidary Shop is located at:  
3111 South Valley View Blvd,  
Building E Shop Suite 125  
Las Vegas, NV 89102

Please, **under no circumstances**, park in front of Unit 124 or Unit 126 (the units next to the SNGMS Lapidary Shop). The owners of the units come in at odd hours and need access to their parking spaces. There is ample parking across from the SNGMS Lapidary Shop that is not in front of any unit.

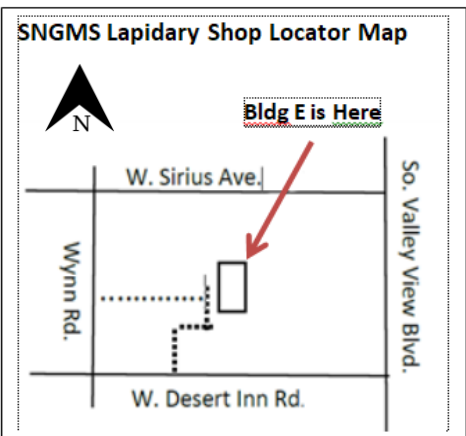
**SNGMS LAPIDARY SHOP HOURS\***

Sunday 10 am - 3 pm  
Monday Closed for general use:  
Various Classes  
Tuesday 10 am - 7 pm  
Wednesday 10 am – 7 pm  
Thursday 12 - 9 pm  
Friday 12 - 9 pm  
Saturday 1 - 6 pm

**SHOP EQUIPMENT FEES:**  
All equipment is \$6/hour. Machines are metered, so you only pay for the time the equipment is actually running.

**SHOP CLOSED:**  
Kids Club: 3- 5 pm 2nd Sunday of the Month

*\*Check Email and “Polished Slab” for possible date changes.*

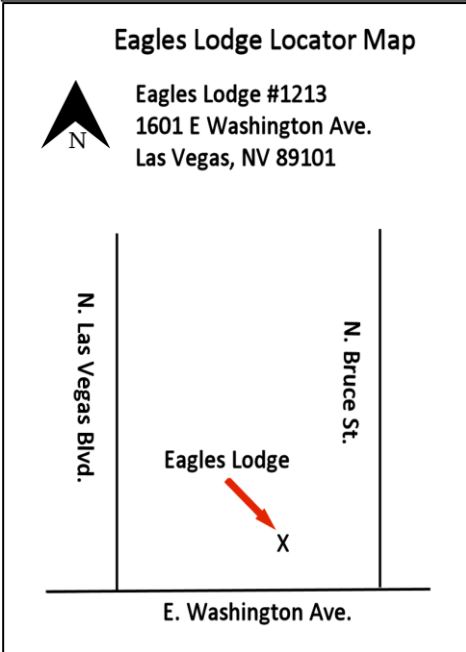


Finding the SNGMS Lapidary Shop

Proceeding west on Desert Inn Road, take the first right past South Valley View Blvd. into the industrial park area. Drive past the building on your right, then jog right, then left and you will be in front of Building E. Another option is to enter off of Wynn Rd. Go west on Desert Inn Rd. to Wynn Rd., turn right onto Wynn Rd. and go to the first entrance on the right (past the BIG white Commercial building sign) turn right and straight in front of you is Building E, Suite #125.

Location of the Eagles’ Lodge

The Eagles’ Lodge is located at:  
1601 E Washington Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89101



Kimo Taylor Painting a Mural at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop  
Photo courtesy of Dave Ford



## Lapidary/Jewelry Studio Tips & Tricks

### Make Your Own Beautiful Tumbled Stone Pendant!

<https://rocktumbler.com/jewelry/necklace-kits/>

#### Supplies To Make A Tumbled Stone Pendant

Tumbled stones (medium-size stones are recommended)  
Chain or Cord with Clasp, Bell Cap, and Bail  
Burnisher (recommended)  
Dish soap (like Dawn) or rubbing alcohol  
Epoxy 330, a small piece of cardboard, and a toothpick  
Sandpaper  
Sand or clay (recommended)



Pendants Made From Tumbled Stones

#### Step 1: Choosing A Stone

The color and shape of the stone are the main things to consider when choosing which stone to use. Look for stones that have a color you like. Then from those stones, choose one with a shape that tapers to a point that will work well with a bell cap. The stone doesn't have to be the exact shape of the bell cap, because you will be adjusting the shape of the bell cap in the next step.

#### Step 2: Preparing The Stone And Bell Cap



Stone, Bell Cap, and Cleaner

Shape the bell cap to fit the stone. Do this by placing the bell cap on the edge of the stone where you plan to glue it, and then gently bend the bell cap fingers so that they come into full contact with the stone. This can be done without using tools; however, it is easier to get a perfect fit by using a burnisher to bend the bell cap prongs.

Now that the bell cap is shaped, lightly sand the parts of the stone where the bell cap will be attached. This light sanding gives a rough surface for the glue to adhere. After sanding, clean both the bell cap and stone using soap and water or rubbing alcohol. This will remove oily fingerprints and residue that may prevent the epoxy from adhering properly to the stone and bell cap.

#### Step 3: Use Epoxy To Attach The Bell Cap To The Stone

Attach the bell cap to the stone with Epoxy 330, a two-part epoxy. Place one drop of Part A on a piece of cardboard, then put one drop of Part B next to it, and mix them thoroughly with a toothpick. With the toothpick, spread a small amount of epoxy on each finger of the bell cap on the side that will touch the stone. Place the bell cap on the stone in the same location where you adjusted the finger shapes. The epoxy takes 15 minutes to set and about two hours to harden. Here is where the sand or clay comes in handy. Place the stone in the sand or a lump of clay so the bell cap is level and won't slide out of place. Make sure that sand or clay does not touch the epoxy.



Stones With Bell Caps Supported In Sand For Drying



Bail and Chain Attached to Bell Cap

#### Step 4: Attach The Stone And Bell Cap To The Pendant

After the epoxy has fully hardened, you can attach the bail to the bell cap. Slide the narrow end of the bail through the loop on the bell cap and squeeze the bail closed. Then thread the necklace chain through the bail.

Congratulations, you have your very own one-of-a-kind tumbled stone pendant!

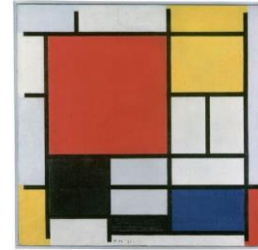




2025 Cabochon Contests

MONTH	2025 CABOCHON STYLE	Contest Winners
January	Impressionism – Monet, Degas, Renior, Cassatt	1 <sup>st</sup> – Del Walkenshaw, 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Bruce Martin, Emlyn Altman, Joel Coombs
February	Cubism – Picasso, Braque, Cezanne, Exter	1 <sup>st</sup> – James Sloan 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Lloyd Chayette, George Stewart
March	Abstract – Mondrain, Rothko, Pollick, O’Keeffe	
April	Sea Scapes - Friedrich, Mallord, Turner, Sorollo, Hassam	
May	Surrealism – Dali, Kahlo, Lucien Freud, Breton	
June	Architectural –Rodde, Caillebotte, Hadid, Canal	
July	Expressionism – Kandinsky, Chagall, Malfati, Macke, Frankenthaler	
August	Contemporary (any type) – Picasso, Warhol, Murakami, Kapoor, Sherald	
September	Fauvism – Matisse, Derain, Roualt, de Vlaminck, Charmy	
October	Landscapes – Carr, Homer, Theibaud, da Vinci	
November	Graffiti – Bansky, Fairey, Halring, Lady Pink	
December	No Contest	

The SNGMS hosts a cabochon contest at our monthly meetings. Bring a cab you have cut that matches that month’s theme. Meeting attendees vote on their favorite cab, and the first and second places winners are announced at the meeting. The first place award is 2 hours of free shop time, and the second place winner gets 1 hour of free shop time. The March 2025 cabochon theme is “Abstract.” **Good Luck!**



**Piet Mondrian**  
**Composition with Large Red Plane, Yellow, Black, Grey and Blue**  
[www.artsy.net/artwork/piet-mondrian-composition-with-large-red-plane-yellow-black-grey-and-blue](http://www.artsy.net/artwork/piet-mondrian-composition-with-large-red-plane-yellow-black-grey-and-blue)



**February 2025 Cabochon Contest Winners**  
 Left to right: Lloyd Chayette (entry 7) and George Stewart (entry 9) tied for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, James Sloan took 1<sup>st</sup> place (entry 10)



**Many Thanks to Tyra Tripp**  
 Tyra volunteered to greet members at our monthly meetings

**SNGMS Lapidary Shop Lockers**

Lockers are available to rent at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop for \$3/month, or \$36/year. You can pay in cash at the Shop.



February 2025 Cabochon Contest Entries



**BIRTHDAYS**

If you have a MARCH birthday, Please bring something for the refreshment table at MARCH’S meeting.



**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**



Veronica Anduha, Tracy Ayers, Jamie Beck, Lydia Bell, Tristan Bnight, Jeff Boyce, Robert Burns, Leslie Burns, Addison Caci, Teresa Carlson, Thomas Claphanson, Joel Coombs, Lesley Denny, David Dziadon, Edgar Espinoza, Mike Fitzpatrick, Carla Ford, Katherine Frank, Justine Frederick, Karen Griffith-Hedberg, Jeremiah Hansen, Alexandar Hayes, Koco Heo, Linda Hill, Cliff Jackson, Frank Koot, Kerin Landry, Roger Lane, Deanna Martin , Mary Ann Mason, Colton Morano, Carol Morrow, Dave Munkres, Melvin Nishiuchi, Sharon Parsons, Kelly Peterson, Aleksandra Platko, Douglas Pyburn, Fiorella Ramirez, Terry Raybould, John Reeks, Brooks Rickard, Thomas Shaw, Joshua Solberg, Tina Spotofora, Morgan Stinnett, Cindy Stordahl, H. Allen Stratton, Victoria Terzo, Marisela Trujillo, Marti Tsagrinos, Norman Vinson, James Walkenshaw, Kerry Wenzl, Theresa Whittle, Charles B. Williams, Imelda Winston, Imelda Winston, Bill Wright

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

*Welcome to members who recently/rejoined SNGMS. We look forward to getting to know you better.*

**NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION**

Welcome new members to the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society! Your passion for gemstones and minerals is a perfect fit for our community of enthusiasts. To acquaint you with our workshop and equipment, we offer orientation and training sessions at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop.

To reserve your spot, please email Richard Nelson (richard\_nelso89@hotmail.com). There is a \$10 fee for the orientation to help cover the cost of materials which will be provided for you.

The session will include demonstrations on the use of rock saws, flat laps, a geode saw, and other equipment. Best practices for working safely and effectively will be reviewed. Orientations are offered as listed below.

**New Member Orientation Sessions**

Orientation and Training Date	Time	Cost	Location
February 9, 2025	10 am - noon	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary Shop 3111 South Valley View Blvd, Building E Shop Suite 125 Las Vegas, NV 89102
March 9, 2025			
April 13, 2025			

**Speakers For 2025 General Meetings**

*(please contact Romy Umholtz romyvision@gmail.com with speaker suggestions)*

Date	Speaker	Topic	Date	Speaker	Topic
Mar. 3	Romy Umholtz	Rock Blocks, Crystal Houses, and Other Artworks	Jul. 7	Garrett Wake: NV Abandoned Mine Program	How to Stake a Mining Claim
May 3	Dr. Nick Saines	The Great Unconformity and Frenchman Mountain/Rainbow Gardens	Sep. 8	Josh Solberg	Something Fun and Interesting
Jun. 9	Nick Barnes	Highlights From My Personal Collection			



**SNGMS Rock Stars Kids Club  
2025 Field Trips and Meetings<sup>1</sup>**

Field Trip/Meeting	Date	Location
Trilobite Field Trip	Saturday, Feb 8, from 8 a.m. – noon <b>RSVP required by 6 pm on Feb. 5<sup>3</sup></b>	Frenchman Mountain
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	Mar 9	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>2</sup>
Field Trip TBA	Apr 13	
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	May 11 – <b>NO MEETING</b>	
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	Jun 8	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>2</sup>
Field Trip TBA	Jul 13	
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	Aug 10	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>2</sup>
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	Sep 14	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>2</sup>
Field Trip TBA	Oct 12	
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	Nov 16	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>2</sup>
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	

- 1) *Field trip destinations, dates, and times are subject to change.*
- 2) *3111 South Valley View Blvd., Building E Shop Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102*
- 3) *Contact Wendy Dresser 702-556-2748*

**SNGMS Educational Outreach**

On Friday, February 28, 2025 the SNGMS will give an educational outreach program at Stanford Elementary School to about 300 students (5350 E Harris Ave, Las Vegas, NV 89110).

Hello Rock Stars!

We're off to a great start this year with our Maps Merit Badge. Thank you to Mr. Thomas Boes who taught our class in January. March 9th we'll be back in the SNGMS Lapidary Shop working on our Rocks and Minerals Merit Badge from 3:00 - 5:00 pm.

Rock On!

**What Is A Display Case?**  
*By Lisa Wiemers*

The SNGMS will be at the Boulder City Spring Jamboree, May 3 – 4, 2025 for our annual show in the gymnasium. Display cases are available to SNGMS members to show off their collections or talents to those attending the show. Contact Lisa Wiemers (702-417-7138) to reserve a case. Displaying your lapidary collections or the rocks and gems you collect is a satisfying aspects of our hobby. Our Rock & Gem Shows are one of the best opportunities for you to show off your unique materials and talents to other members, rockhounds, friends , and the general public.

Displaying is not complicated or time consuming. With a little preplanning you can create an attractive display that is easy to transport, simple to set up, and interesting to viewers. Remember to keep it simple. The inside dimensions of the cases are 45"W X 22"H X 22"D. They are made of wood that might make a good background for your display, but you may prefer to make liners with in a color that will accent your display. Some members choose to make liners, some do not; the choice is yours.

Liners are easy to make. Cardboard or thin styrofoam can be easily trimmed to the exact size of the case dimensions. You need two ends, a back, and a bottom. The bottom can be flat, or risers of various shapes made from styrofoam can be used to show off your display items to their best advantage. Or you can use rough rocks, driftwood or whatever enhances your display by elevating some of the items.

Mark out a space on a floor or table at home measuring 45" X 22" (the inside dimensions of the case) and start laying out the items you want to display. When you decide "what," then decide "what color" will accent your items. Don't distract from your display - enhance it. If you decide you need risers, you can use the same or a contrasting color to cover them. Next, cut the material you have selected a few inches larger than the liner or risers so you can wrap it around and fasten it on the back side with pins or masking tape. Now you are ready to display in the Gem Show! Simple? You bet! Next, find a nice box that everything can be packed into, pick up your liners and risers, and get ready for the show!



**SNGMS 2025 VOLUNTEER STAFF**

Contact any Director to volunteer for a position, or a Committee Chair to offer to help on their committee.

**SNGMS 2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Raffle	DiAnn Lawson	diannmariehayes@yahoo.com	702-577-7183
Refreshments	Richard and Elizabeth Nelson	richard_nelso89@hotmail.com	
Rock Stars	Wendy Dresser	wndresser@gmail.com	702-556-2748
Scholarship	Debbie Bucknam	grandmadeb10@gmail.com	
Spring Jamboree Show	Orville Weimers	sngmsjamboreeshowchair@gmail.com	702-743-3277
Sunshine	Mary Beth Paladino		702-255-1647
Viva Las Vegas Rocks Show	Andrea Packo	aspacko@gmail.com	702-279-7679
Webmaster	Lorrilee Stackhouse	lorrilee@proton.me	702-817-5602

**Back-Up Lapidary Shop Supervisor Volunteers Needed**

**Contact Chops Weinzl for details 702-378-2205**



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**Jason Howell Fabbi**  
Life Time Member

Jason Fabbi is a third generation rock hound and a fifth generation Nevadan with an interest in nature and a special fondness for reptiles. He worked at a private zoo in New York City. His favorite reptiles were the Gila monsters. Part of the job was giving public presentations. One of the more unusual venues was a psychiatric hospital. Jason says the people there were more interesting than the reptiles!

Jason worked on a teaching degree in secondary education. He took earth science classes at the College of Southern Nevada (CSN), including a gemology class, and began working with stones.

He met the Turquoise Chief, a silversmith and lapidarist. The Chief taught Jason how to make cabochons, and he introduced Jason to the SNGMS. At the SNGMS Lapidary Shop, Jason met Art Lory (a master faceter), and Tom Skeary who helped train Jason to make cabochons.

Jason’s first love was turquoise. Now he has a love/hate relationship with it due to the large amount of fakes in circulation. As often happens, Jason decided to learn silversmithing so he could set stones. He took three semesters of jewelry making at CSN. About 2010, Jason decided to work with rocks full time. He completed a Gemological Institute of America (GIA) gemology certification. His income was supplemented by cooking, including a job at the Quartzsite Yacht Club (a restaurant in Arizona). He tent-camped behind the restaurant and cooked for three seasons. He blew all his earnings on rocks from the Quartzsite show!



**Jason Fabbi**

**HI-TECH DIAMOND DISCOUNT**

Hi-Tech Diamond is an online seller of cabbing supplies and equipment. They offer a 10% discount to SNGMS members, friends, and families on everything EXCEPT machines, gift cards, and repairs. The discount is applied when you enter the discount code **SNGMS** at checkout. The code must be manually entered at checkout, it is NOT an automatic discount! The Hi-Tech website is [www.hitechdiamond.com](http://www.hitechdiamond.com).

Jason met Ed and Jaen Rupprecht around 2010. Jason wound up living in a van behind the Rupprecht’s house and helping Jaen after Ed died. In 2019, John and Lorrilee Stackhouse nominated Jason for Life Time Membership in the SNGMS which was approved. Jason served as the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies representative, and as a three year SNGMS board member from 2017 – 2019. He also facilitated field trips to Delta, Utah for trilobites with friends who owned the claim. Now Jason spends summers in Washington State while doing rock shows in Oregon.



## Mineral Musings

**Bahia Emerald Brings Scandal and Glam to the Silver State**

[www.reviewjournal.com/news/emerald-recovered-in-lv-just-a-rock-police-want-to-drop/](http://www.reviewjournal.com/news/emerald-recovered-in-lv-just-a-rock-police-want-to-drop/)  
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[www.the-sun.com/news/12755898/bahia-emerald-worlds-biggest-cursed-brazil/](http://www.the-sun.com/news/12755898/bahia-emerald-worlds-biggest-cursed-brazil/)

The Bahia Emerald, a legendary gemstone, is shrouded in mystery and controversy. Discovered in Brazil, this massive emerald has sparked legal battles, ownership disputes, and tales of a curse that haunts those who possess it.



The State of Bahia Is In Eastern Brazil

In 2001, miners in Bahia, Brazil, discovered one of the world's largest emerald clusters in the Carnaíba mining district of the state of Bahia. Brazilian stones are typically cloudy appearance, but the emeralds found in Carnaíba are also huge, with the Bahia Emerald being the most astonishing example. It weighs 840 pounds with an estimated value of \$925 million. What happened next? A trail of misfortune leading to tales of a curse on anyone who tries to profit from the stone.

The emerald had quite the adventure getting out of Brazil. It was carried by mules, but they were attacked by panthers, so some guys had to carry it out on a stretcher made from wood and vines. They took 11 months to walk 700 miles. Then the stone was sold for a measly \$8,000 to two gem hunters who took it to São Paulo. It was almost lost in a flood on the way there, and ended up sitting in a garage for years.



The Bahia Emerald

Photo by Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

In 2005, the gem was shipped to a mining entrepreneur in California who knew the original miners. He shipped the stone to New Orleans so a prospective buyer could see it. Hurricane Katrina struck two weeks later, leaving the storage vault and the Bahia Emerald under 16 feet of water. After fishing it out, the entrepreneur somehow lost possession of the gem and it ended up in the hands of another California investor.

After Katrina, the emerald was allegedly used as collateral for some diamonds. The owner of the diamonds claimed he had been kidnapped by the Brazilian mafia, held hostage in an RV, and driven around Nevada for two weeks!

The stone eventually came into the hands of an investor who stored it in a vault in Los Angeles. It was stolen from the Los Angeles vault. Law enforcement then tracked the emerald to a Las Vegas vault. Since ownership of the gem was in question, the L.A. sheriff's department confiscated it in 2008.

For more than a decade, individuals and corporations tried in court to prove they were the rightful owners of the stone. Meanwhile, the Brazilian government took action in U.S. federal court to repatriate the gemstone. The National Geographic Channel aired an hour-long documentary about the emerald (and the Columbian emerald trade) in January of 2012 ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgE\\_naVBTKQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgE_naVBTKQ)).

In 2017, Brazil convicted two Brazilian residents of illegally smuggling the emerald into the U.S. using fake documents. After the two men lost an appeal in 2021, Brazil issued an order to seize the Bahia Emerald.

In November 2024, a U.S. court determined the government of Brazil owns the stone, paving the way to return it to Brazil.



February 2025 Class Schedule

(see page 10 for New Member Orientation Schedule)

Class	Instructor	Date and Time	Cost	Location	Contact
Beading	Theresa Brooks	Monday from 5 – 8 pm	\$10 (exact change only)	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>1</sup>	
Wire Wrapping	Peggy Sue Moore	Monday, Feb. 17, 5 pm	\$5 (yup, \$5)	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>1</sup>	moorepeggysue@gmail.com
Stringer	Amber Palecek	Monday, Feb. 24, 5 pm	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>1</sup>	702-343-7150 (text, please)
Faceting	Tom Kidwell	Saturdays 9 am - 1 pm	\$15.00 for the class plus \$5.00 for instructor fuel fund	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>1</sup>	moorepeggysue@gmail.com for reservations - must commit to 3 consecutive classes
Cabochon Making	Peggy Sue Moore	Saturdays 1 pm – class limited to 3 people		SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>1</sup>	moorepeggysue@gmail.com for reservations
Silversmithing	Andy Gomez	from 3 – 7 pm	\$25	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>1</sup>	andrewquilesgomez415@gmail.com

1) 3111 S. Valley View Blvd, Bldg E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102

All SNGMS class fees include a modest donation to the SNGMS. SNGMS Instructors volunteer their time and expertise to help extend the knowledge of our members.

**Beginning Silversmithing Classes**

Fridays 9:30 am - 12:15pm  
AND 12:30 – 3:15 pm

**Desert Art Supplies**  
2750 N Green Valley Pkwy Suite D  
Henderson, NV 89014  
702-451-8040

Learn the basics of silversmithing. Students learn how to use a jeweler’s saw, solder, set stones, and cast silver. Supplies needed for the first project in copper are provided. Student tool kits and materials for subsequent projects are available for purchase from Desert Art Supplies.

\$40/class, class sizes are limited.  
Call 702-451-8040 for availability.

[www.instagram.com/lvsilversmithing](http://www.instagram.com/lvsilversmithing)



**SNGMS members receive first class free with this ad & proof of membership**  
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**Did You Know?**

A small selection of lapidary and silversmithing tools are sold at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop. Check with the shop supervisor to make a purchase.



Sample Projects for Upcoming Beading Classes



Southern Nevada Gem & Mineral Society  
 3111 S. Valley View Blvd, E-125  
 Las Vegas, NV 89102

Return Service Requested



The Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society is a non-profit corporation, organized to educate ourselves and the community in the science and arts related to rocks, minerals, gems, fossils, and nature in general. Fostering an understanding and appreciation of the physical world, we can use it and protect it for future generations.

SNGMS Mascot: Rock Wren  
 SNGMS Gemstone: Turquoise  
 SNGMS Motto: Rocks-R-Us  
 SNGMS Web Site: [www.snvgs.org](http://www.snvgs.org)  
 Membership is open to anyone with an interest in:  
 Rocks, Gems, Geology, Fossils, Lapidary Arts or  
 Silversmithing  
 Annual Dues: Individual - \$25; Family - \$35  
 Meetings start 6 pm on the first Monday of the  
 month at:  
 Eagles Lodge #1213  
 1601 E Washington  
 Las Vegas, NV 89101  
 (702) 642-1213  
 No meeting is held in December. Instead we have  
 our annual awards dinner.

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