



THE POLISHED SLAB

SOUTHERN NEVADA GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY



October 2023

A NEWSLETTER FOR ROCKHOUSES SINCE 1940

VOLUME 83 ISSUE 10

UPCOMING MEETINGS

November 2, 2023 - Board Mtg

November 6, 2023 - Genl Mtg 6 pm

SNGMS Contacts:

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Where did Summer go?

Fall is upon us as the temps cool and the Festivals get into full swing.

The Kids Club is having a Costume Party for Halloween on Oct 8 at the shop from 3-5 pm. Prizes and fun are bound to happen!

Del Walkenshaw is leading a trip to the Easter Blue Mine and the Broken Arrow Mine for turquoise and variscite on October 22 & 23, 2023. This is a fee dig, so please contact him if you are interested in going (desertartsupply@aol.com or 702-451-8040).

Our Viva Las Vegas Rocks! Show is happening at the Santa Fe Station Casino in the Ballroom:

November 3, 2023 Friday 1pm – 7pm

November 4, 2023 Saturday 9am-5pm

November 5, 2023 Sunday 9am-4pm.

Lots of activities are happening so please plan to attend and bring your friends!

We have an opening for the SNGMS Shop Supervisor. Andrea Kincannon will be around to help transition to a new supervisor, but life commitments have her stepping down. This position starts immediately. Please contact Andrea Kincannon if you are interested (andrea.kincannon@gmail.com).

We also need a Jamboree Show Chairman for our Spring Show 2023 in Boulder City. We need to get this started immediately since it is held the first week in May. To volunteer, contact Andrea Packo (sngmspresident@gmail.com or 702-279-7679) or Orville Weimers (sngmsvicepresident@gmail.com or 702-366-5854).

Thanks to all of you who stepped up to run for open Board positions. We had quite a few volunteers. I wish all of you luck in the elections next month. Please plan to attend our general meeting on November 6, 2023 at the Eagles Lodge - we need your votes!

Have you checked out the classes on the SNGMS monthly calendar (see page 15 of this newsletter)? We have quite a few to offer. Or perhaps you'd like to teach a special holiday class? Let us know (contact Orville Weimers sngmsvicepresident@gmail.com, or 702-366-5854)!

See you in the Rocks!

Andrea Packo
SNGMS President

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2023 Field Trips¹ & Events

Field Trip ¹ /Event	Date	Location
Variscite/Turquoise Pay to Dig ¹	October 22-23, 2023	Tonopah, NV October 22 - Easter Blue Mine October 23 - Broken Arrow Mine
Viva Las Vegas Rock & Gem Show & Sale	November 3-5, 2023	Santa Fe Station Casino, 4949 N Rancho Dr, Las Vegas, NV 89130
Desert Art Supplies Parking Lot Sale ²	November 11, 2023	Desert Art Supplies 2750 N Green Valley Pky Suite D Henderson NV 89014
Purple Agate Trip ¹	TBD	Burro Creek, AZ

- 1) Field trip destinations, dates, and times are subject to change. Contact Joel Coombs joel.coombs@bldr.com
- 2) Vendor booths available, contact Del Walkenshaw desertartsupply@aol.com 702-451-8040

Some links with information you may find helpful:

American Federation Of Mineralogical Societies – www.amfed.org/whatsnew.htm
 Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies – www.rmfmts.org
 Rock & Gem Magazine website – www.rockngem.com



Blasting at Topaz Mountain, Sep. 2023
 Photo courtesy of Rhonda Sherry

SNGMS will present the

Viva Las Vegas Rocks!

**Rock and Gem Show and Sale at
 Santa Fe Station Casino in Las Vegas, NV**

Show dates are

November 3-5, 2023



Topaz Mountain Sunset, Sep. 2023
 Photo courtesy of Rhonda Sherry



SNGMS Board Meeting Minutes for 9/28/2023

On September 28, 2023, the regular Board of Directors meeting of the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society was called to order at the SNGMS Shop at 6 pm by the President. All Board members except the Vice-President and the Two Year Board member, Ron Mazz were present. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was recited.

The minutes of the September 7, 2023 meeting were approved as read.

Treasurers Report: Funds designated for long term investment have not yet been invested. The treasurer reported account balances with a September 30, 2023 checking balance of \$30,776.51. A report of income and expenses year to date was distributed to Board members.

Shop Report: Wheels will be replaced as needed on the Cab Kings. Harvey Bergeron will be asked to attend the November Board Meeting to discuss his saw attachment. Clarification is needed on how the attachment could be used in the Shop.

Unfinished Business:

Dale Bright has resigned as the Viva Las Vegas Show Chair and Andrea Packo will serve as Chair. There are 51 vendor booths sold.

New Business

In a confidential matter Standing Rule #11 was reviewed by the Board with agreement that the rule applies to the matter.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 PM.

Ten Things I Want In My Life

1. Rocks
2. More rocks
3. Friends with rocks
4. A big house for all my rocks
5. Money for rocks
6. Rocks
7. A partner who is ok with rocks
8. A big car to fit my rocks
9. A "rock room" for my rocks
10. Rocks



SNGMS General Meeting Minutes for 10/2/2023

On October 2nd, 2023, the regular meeting of the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society was called to order at 6 PM by the President. The Secretary was present. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was recited.

The minutes of the September 11th, 2023 meeting were approved as corrected.

Treasurers Report: The treasurer was absent due to illness, and no report was given.

Membership: Claudia Crouse reported that there are currently 580 adult and 126 child members in the SNGMS.

Kids Club: Wendy Dresser reported on the Kid's Club activities. She thanked members for their continuing support. The kids will have a costume contest and create 'mummy' rocks as well as filling grab bags at the October meeting.

Shop Report: Del Walkenshaw reported that one saw is down and wheels have been replaced as needed on the Cab Kings.

Presentation: Steve Roland, UNLV Professor Emeritus of Geology and staff member at the Las Vegas Museum of Natural History spoke on "The Amazing Geology of Frenchman Mountain and Rainbow Gardens."

Sunshine Report: The Sunshine Chairs were absent. Pat Skeary was reported to have had several hospitalizations but is now at home.

Unfinished Business: President Andrea Packo announced that Dale Bright has resigned as Chair of the Viva Las Vegas Show and she will be sole Chair. There are a total of 51 paid vendor slots.

The Cabochon Contest theme for October 2023 was Shark. The first place winner was Joel Coombs. Second place was a tie between Lloyd Chayette and Ron Mazz. Next month's subject will be Whales.

New Business: For upcoming events refer to the SNGMS calendar and emails.

Del Walkenshaw nominated Bruce Martin for Lifetime Membership. It was enthusiastically approved by the Membership that Bruce be granted Lifetime Membership.

Elections are approaching. Let a Board member know if you are interested in being on the Election Committee or if you are interested in running for a Board position. Also needed are a Shop Manager and a Spring Jamboree Chair.

Mike Kirk is chairing the Nominating Committee. The nominations are:

- President: Andrea Packo
- Vice-President: Orville Wiemers
- Secretary: Lorrilee Stackhouse
- Treasurer: David Ford and Peggy Sue Moore
- Parliamentarian: Jack Toogood
- Three Year Board: Harvey Bergeron and Jean Chayette
- One Year Board: Bruce Martin.

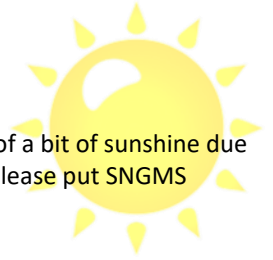
Additional nominations will be accepted before voting at the November General Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36 PM.



Sunshine Report

from Beth Jones



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 call Beth Jones at 702-505-5819 or email her at punkyjones@hotmail.com (please put SNGMS Sunshine in the Subject).

Pat Skeary has been ill.

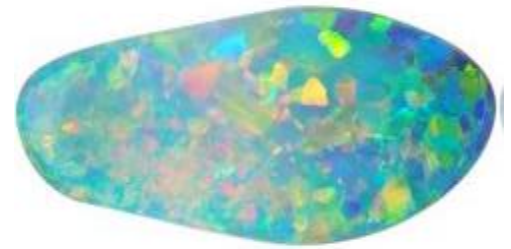
Opal, the October Birthstone

Opal is the October birthstone. It is a hydrated amorphous form of silica; its water content may range from 3 to 21% by weight, but is usually between 6 and 10%. Opals are valued for their shifting rainbow colors, a phenomenon known as "play-of-color." They are soft stones, ranging from 5 to 6.5 on the Mohs scale of hardness.

Ethiopia, Mexico and Brazil are important sources of opals. Opals have also been found in Central Europe, Honduras, Indonesia, Madagascar, Peru, Turkey and the United States. The Rainbow Ridge Mine in the Virgin Valley of southeastern Nevada is a source of specimen opal. Rainbow Ridge opals form as casts of wood and can appear as limbs twigs or even pinecones.

Australia is the most famous place in the world for opals. Lightning Ridge, a small town in New South Wales, Australia, produces black opal. The climate is so hot that miners often live underground to escape the heat. White opal is found in the White Cliffs area of New South Wales, as well as in Mintabie, Andamooka and Coober Pedy in South Australia. Boulder opal, which comes from only one location in the world, is mined in Queensland.

Opal may be treated with oil, wax or plastic. Opal doublets or triplets are fine slices of opal glued to a base material and covered with a thin dome of clear quartz. The safest way to clean opals is with warm, soapy water. Opal can fracture if exposed to high heat or sudden temperature changes.



Boulder Opal

www.opalsdownunder.com.au/learn/boulder-opa

Geo Jokes

Q: Why did the prospector throw her ore samples away?

A: She took them for granite.

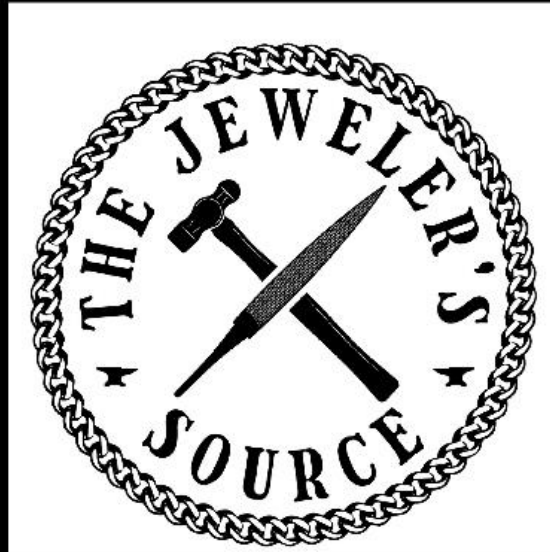
Q: Where do rocks sleep?

A: Bedrock.

Q. Where do you find the president of the jewelry company?

A. In the Opal Office.





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thejewelerssource@gmail.com

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SNGMS Meeting Schedules and Lapidary Shop Hours

SNGMS 2023 Meeting Schedule			
Board Meeting ¹	General Meeting ²	Mineral Group Meeting ³	Kids Club Meeting ⁴
November 2	November 6	October 12	2nd Sunday of every month (unless it falls on a holiday) from 3pm - 5pm
November 30	none		
Awards Banquet December 03			

- 1) Location and time announced via email
- 2) Meets at Eagles' Lodge 1st 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, membership required
- 4) Meets at SNGMS Lapidary Shop with exception of some field trips, membership required

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

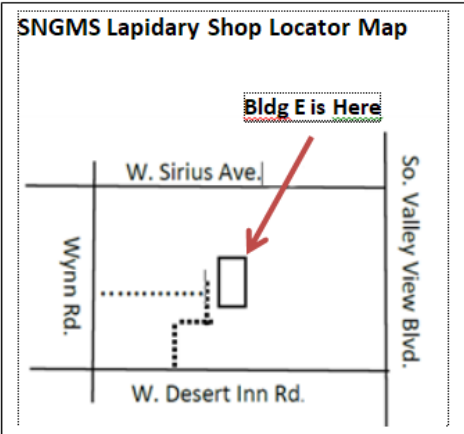
SHOP EQUIPMENT FEES:

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
 Board Mtg: Various Thursday 6-7 pm

**Check Email and "Polished Slab" for possible date changes.*

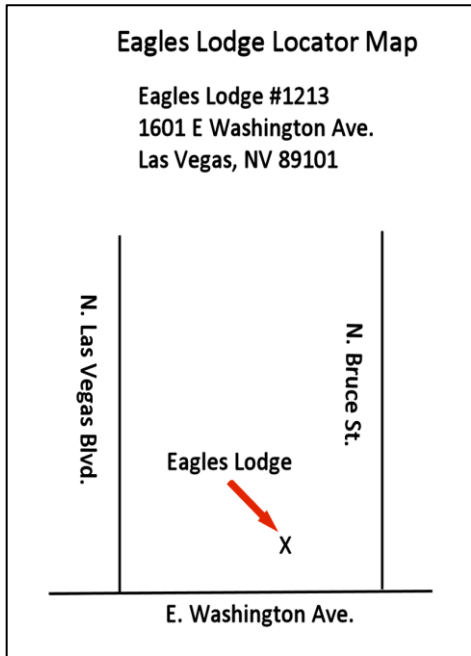


Finding the SNGMS Lapidary Shop

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



Lapidary/Jewelry Studio Tips & Tricks Top 4 Wire Wrapping Tips & Tricks

Excerpted from

<https://www.cooksongold.com/blog/learn/4-wire-wrapping-tips-and-tricks-to-refine-your-designs>

When you're first starting out with wire wrapping, practice on the cheaper wire like copper and brass. Avoid using aluminum wire because it's too soft to hold its shape, and stainless steel wire will be too hard to work with.

1: File The Ends Of Your Wire

Whatever wire jewelry designs you're working with, it's important to make sure that you finish the ends of your wire by filing. Often when cut your wire, some sharp edges can be left behind so filing makes the pieces safe to wear. Use a flat file, a flat needle file, or a cup burr for your Dremel or flexshaft, to smooth any sharp edges and to create a professional finish.

2: Keep Your Round Nose Pliers Close



Round Nose Pliers

Your round nose pliers will be invaluable when you're perfecting your wire jewelry designs, so make sure you keep them close by. When you first start making jump rings or other tight loops for your designs, it can be hard to keep them the same size.

One way of conquering this challenge is to mark a specific point on your pliers with a marker or scribes so you know where to start forming a loop. With a mark, there's no need to guess, just use the mark on your pliers for a consistent loop every time.

3: Work-Harden Your Wire When Finished

Note: These techniques may not work with coated metals like Zebra Wire and Parawire. To ensure your wire wrapped jewelry stands up to everyday wear and tear, you'll need to work harden it. Work hardening is the process of forcing wire into a harder state, giving it strength and therefore allowing it to hold its shape. Work hardening can be done before and after you have completed your design.

Work hardening can be done by:

- Hammering the wire with a rawhide mallet
- Twisting the wire with a pair of pliers
- Pulling the wire straight multiple times
- Tumbling the finished piece in a rotary rock tumbler with stainless steel shot. This method is great for hardening lots of pieces at the same time. BUT many stones will be damaged by the tumbling process. If in doubt, don't do it!



Stainless Steel Shot

4: Close Loops To Keep Your Gemstones In Place

If you are wire wrapping gemstones, be sure you firmly close the wire loops around your stone to make sure the stone stays in place. The great thing about wire wrapping jewelry is that you can close loops in a creative yet functional way to create unique pieces.

Now you're ready to put these wire wrapping techniques into practice, so stock up on your chosen wire jewelry supplies. Create your signature jewelry making style!



Wire Wrapped Pendants

<https://jewelrymakingjournal.com/practicing-wire-wrapping-cab-pendants>

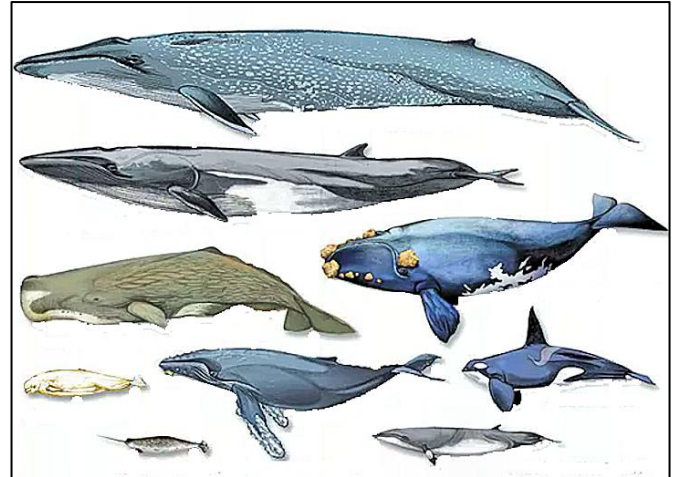


2023 Cabochon Contests

MONTH	CABOCHON THEME	CONTEST WINNER
January	Rainbow Trout	Lloyd Chayette & Bruce Martin tied
February	Lion Fish	Lloyd Chayette 1 st George Stewart 2 nd
March	Clown Fish	Lloyd Chayette 1 st Bruce Martin 2 nd
April	Jellyfish	Ron Mazz 1 st Bruce Martin 2 nd
May	Lobster	Lloyd Chayette 1 st Joel Coombs 2 nd
June	Starfish	Lloyd Chayette 1 st , Ron Mazz 2 nd
July	Octopus	Bruce Martin 1 st , George Stewart 2 nd
August	Seahorse	George Stewart & Bruce Martin tied
September	Coral	Ron Mazz 1 st , Lloyd Chayette 2 nd
October	Shark	Joel Coombs 1 st , Lloyd Chayette & Ron Mazz tied for 2 nd
November	Whales	
December	No Contest	

The SNGMS hosts a cabochon contest at each of 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 November 2023 cabochon theme is "Whale."

Good Luck!



Whales

www.smithsonian.com

TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE CABOCHON CONTEST YOU MUST HAVE AT LEAST ONE HOUR OF PAID SHOP TIME FOR THE PRIOR MONTH

October 2023 Cabochon Contest Winners



Left to right:

Ron Mazz 2nd (tie) for #5; Joel Coombs, 1st for #4; Lloyd Chayette 2nd (tie) for #6

October 2023 Cabochon Contest Entries



2024 Cabochon Contests

The theme for the 2024 cabochon contests is "Nature's Colors." Topics for each month are listed below.

MONTH	CABOCHON THEME	MONTH	CABOCHON THEME	MONTH	CABOCHON THEME	MONTH	CABOCHON THEME
January	Snow	April	Storm Clouds	July	Mountains	October	Fall Leaf Colors
February	Forest Colors	May	Blue Skies	August	Tropical	November	Landscapes
March	Spring Flowers	June	Sunset	September	Ocean Blues	December	No Contest



BIRTHDAYS

If you have a NOVEMBER birthday, Please bring something for the refreshment table at NOVEMBER's meeting.



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS



Jose Aragon, Alaciann Baggett, Chad Blakely, Natalie Blazic, Unette Branson, Dale Bright, Jerry Buckler, Jordan Cassel, Jean Chayette, Lloyd Chayette, Caryn Crotty, Landon Curley, Darlene D'Angelo, Angelika Dishmon, Susan Dobson, Wendy Dresser, Ruth Dziadon, Tiana Elliotte, Debbie Farnsworth, Elaine Fortuna, Billi Gremain, Ann Harris, Joe Iglesias, Deb Iglesias, Beth Jones, Sheena Klien, William Kogan, Debra Koladziej, Thomas Lasater, Michaela Lash, Alfonso Luna, Bruce Martin, Neal Masters, David Morrison, Peggy Morrison, Candy Munkres, Jonnae Pernermon, Evan Plumleigh, Myria L. Rodriguez-Hall, Robert Rodriguez-Hall, Bella Romero, James Sloane, Talia Smith, Mary Tarifa, James Taylor, Frank Timbers, Elly Walkenshaw, Kendra White, Mike Wisniewski, Stephanie Wood

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

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

Victoria Paul, David Woolston, Eric Wright

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
Sunday, October 1, 2023	10 a.m.	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary Shop
Sunday, October 15, 2023	10 a.m.	\$10	3111 South Valley View Blvd,
Sunday, November 12, 2023	10 a.m.	\$10	Building E Shop Suite 125
Sunday, December 3, 2023	10 a.m.	\$10	Las Vegas, NV 89102 Building E Suite 125 Las Vegas NV 89102



**SNGMS Rock Stars Kids Club
2023 Field Trips and Meetings¹**

Field Trip/Meeting	Date	Location
Rock Stars Kid's Club Meeting, Gemstone Lore & Legend Merit Badge 13.2	October 8, 2023	SNGMS Lapidary Shop, 3111 South Valley View Blvd, Building E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102
Rock Stars Kid's Club Meeting, Gemstone Lore & Legend Merit Badge 13.3	November 12, 2023	SNGMS Lapidary Shop, 3111 South Valley View Blvd, Building E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102
No Meeting – Holiday Party	December 10, 2023	

1) Field trip destinations, dates, and times are subject to change.

Future Rockhounds of America is Now on Facebook

In addition to the web site, www.juniors.amfed.org, Future Rockhounds of America is now on Facebook, www.facebook.com/AFMS.FRA.

Kids Club Merit Badges

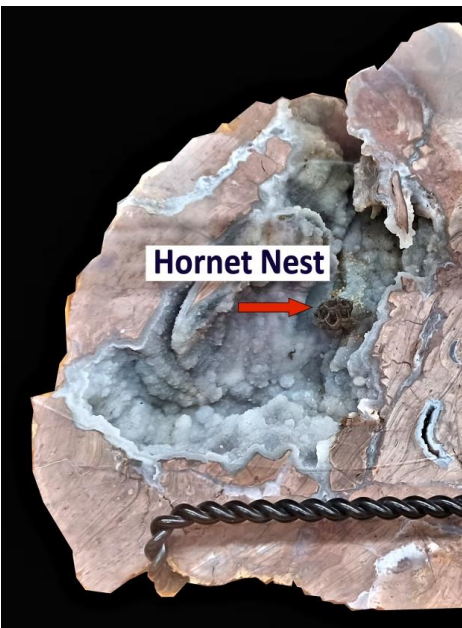
The Kids Club works on merit badges sponsored by the American Federation of Mineralogical Society. The badges focus on earth sciences and lapidary arts. There are 20 different badges the kids can earn (similar to Scouting). Each badge has a list of requirements. Out of that list, the kids complete a minimum of three requirements to earn a badge. In November 2023, the SNGMS Kids Club will start working on the Stone Age Tools merit badge.

Speakers For 2023 General Meetings

Date	Speaker	Topic
6-Nov-23	SNGMS Elections – no speaker	
Dec-23	No general meeting	

If you have suggestions for 2024 Speakers, please contact Romy Umholtz (luckyiamr@hotmail.com)

Hornet Nest Geode



At the 2023 Boulder City Spring Jamboree, SNGMS members cut open a geode from Goldfield, Nevada and were surprised to find a hornet nest! The hornet seems to have crawled into a crack in the geode, and then built a nest which was revealed when the rock was sliced.

Thanks to Del Walkenshaw for donating a display case for the geode. You can see it at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop.

**Hornet Nest Geode
From Goldfield, Nevada**



SNGMS 2023 VOLUNTEER STAFF

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

SNGMS 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICE	DIRECTOR	EMAIL	PHONE
President	Andrea Packo	sngmspresident@gmail.com	702-279-7679
Vice-President	Orville Wiemers	sngmsvicepresident@gmail.com	702-366-5854
Secretary	Lorrilee Stackhouse	lorrilee@proton.me	702-817-5602
Treasurer	Peggy Sue Moore	sngmstreasurer@gmail.com	702-434-6072
Parliamentarian	Jack Toogood	vegasmw@hotmail.com	702-510-4192
One Year Board	Ron Mazz	zman8229@gmail.com	586-914-4130
Two Year Board	Del Walkenshaw	desertartsupply@aol.com	702-451-8040
Three Year Board	Bob Belcher	f35fighterman@yahoo.com	702-210-9612
Past President	Lloyd Chayette	chayette.lloyd@yahoo.com	714-474-6384

SNGMS 2023 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

COMMITTEE	CHAIR	EMAIL	PHONE
Communication	Del Walkenshaw	sngmsnews@gmail.com	702-451-8040
Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies	Sheri Johnson		
Alt Federation	Mary Beth Paladino		702-255-1647
Facebook Master	Dale Bright	dalebright1@hotmail.com	
Field Trip	Joel Coombs & Bill Kogan	sngmsnews@gmail.com	
Shop Manager	Andrea Kincannon	andrea.kincannon@gmail.com	
General Meeting Greeter	Dave Ford		
Historian	Dale Bright	dalebright1@hotmail.com	
Hospitality	Open		
Inventory	Ron Mazz	zman8229@gmail.com	586-914-4130
Librarian	Mario Luchetta		
Membership	Claudia Crouse	ccrouse295@gmail.com	
Newsletter	Mary Savage	lasvegassilversmithing@protonmail.com	
New Member Liaison	Joann Sprott		
Program (Speakers)	Romy Umholtz	luckyiamr@hotmail.com	
Publicity	Andrea Packo	sngmspresident@gmail.com	702-279-7679
Raffle/Lottery	Ron Mazz	zman8229@gmail.com	586-914-4130
Refreshments	Fran & Allen Stratton		
Rock Stars	Wendy Dresser	wndresser@gmail.com	702-556-2748
Scholarship	Debbie Bucknam		
Spring Jamboree Show	Sara Schiller	sngmsjam@gmail.com	
Sunshine	Beth Jones	punkyjones@hotmail.com	702-505-5819
Viva Las Vegas Show	Dale Bright	dalebright1@hotmail.com	
Webmaster	Lorrilee Stackhouse	lorrilee@cox.net	



SNGMS CORPORATE SPONSORS



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Did You Know?

The SNGMS Lapidary Shop rents metal detectors to SNGMS members.

Metal Detector Rentals
\$3.00 per day
Provide your own batteries
(8 AA batteries required)
Rentals limited to 7 days



World Class Facility Services
6230 Greyhound Ave
Suite H
Las Vegas, NV 89122
702-875-4642

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.



Mineral Musings

The Roebling Opal from Virgin Valley, Nevada

Opal is a hydrated amorphous form of silica. Its water content may range from 3-21% by weight, but is usually between 6- 10%. Because of its amorphous character, it is classed as a mineraloid.

Nevada is famous for some precious opal beds and has produced valuable specimens. Virgin Valley black fire opal is Nevada's official state precious gemstone. Black fire opal is found in only two places: Nevada's Virgin Valley and New South Wales, Australia. Virgin Valley opal was first discovered in 1905.

The Virgin Valley opal beds are in northwest Humboldt County, south of Highway 140 about 25 miles southwest of Denio, Nevada. In these beds, precious opal replacing wood and other plant material has been found. The opal can be found in the form of wood casts. The formations consist of volcanic ash and mud originally deposited in shallow lakes. The sediments are partly covered by lava flows. Precious opal is sparsely and irregularly distributed throughout the deposit.



**Roebling Opal from
Virgin Valley, Nevada**
<https://naturalhistory.si.edu>



Emily Warren Roebling
www.asce.org

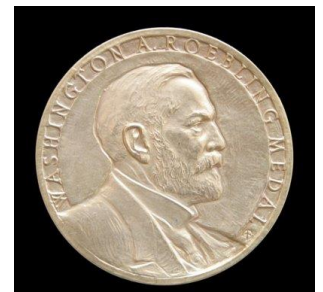
A famous opal discovery in the Virgin Valley is the Roebling Opal, found in 1917. Weighing 1.5 pounds or 2,585 carats, this black opal exhibits stunning flashes of blue and green play-of-color. The opal was acquired by Washington Augustus Roebling (1837-1926).

Roebling became interested in minerals while he was a student at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. He served in the Union Army during the Civil War, and fought at the Battle of Gettysburg. He was a civil engineer who supervised construction of the Brooklyn Bridge in New York after the Civil War. Roebling was crippled in an accident during construction of the bridge, so his wife, Emily Warren Roebling, became his field superintendent. (Ken Burns made a documentary about the Brooklyn Bridge that discusses the Roeblings)

While recovering from the accident, Roebling's interest in minerals intensified. He joined the Mineralogical Society of America in 1919 when the Society was founded. In 1924 he served as Vice-President. Roebling gave the Society money that supports the award of a mineralogical research prize. It is the Society's highest award, and is named the "Roebling Award" in honor of Washington Roebling.



Washington Roebling
Harper's Weekly 1883



Roebling Award
Mineralogical Society
of America

The American Society of Civil Engineers also named an award after three members of the Roebling family:

- 1) John A. Roebling - the visionary designer and builder of suspension bridges
- 2) Washington Roebling - John's son, who translated his father's design into the Brooklyn Bridge.
- 3) Emily Warren Roebling - Washington's wife, who became Washington Roebling's field superintendent

The Roebling Award is given to an engineer who has demonstrated a lifetime of excellence in the structural engineering of bridges.

After Washington Roebling died in 1926, his family donated the Roebling Opal to the Smithsonian Institution. There is a street named "Roebling Opal Way" in Henderson, Nevada in honor of the stone!



October 2023 Class Schedule

(see page 10 for New Member Orientation Schedule)

Class	Instructor	Date and Time	Cost	Location	Contact
Beading	Gary Webb & Sue Dobson	Monday, October 9 5 pm	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary Shop, 3111 S. Valley View Blvd, Bldg E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102	
Wire Wrapping	Peggy Sue Moore	Monday, October 16 5 pm	\$11	SNGMS Lapidary Shop, 3111 S. Valley View Blvd, Bldg E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102	moorepeggysue@gmail.com
Cabochon Making	Beth Jones	Sunday, October 29 3-6 pm	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary Shop, 3111 S. Valley View Blvd, Bldg E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102	punkyjones@hotmail.com 702-505-5819
Faceting	Tom Kidwell	Saturdays 9 am - 12 pm	\$15.00 for the class plus \$5.00 for instructor fuel fund	SNGMS Lapidary Shop, 3111 S. Valley View Blvd, Bldg E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102	moorepeggysue@gmail.com for reservations
Silver Smithing*	Bella Romero & Mary Savage	Fridays 12:30-3:30 pm	\$35	Desert Art Supplies 2750 N Green Valley Pky Suite D Henderson NV 89014	Text 702-425-0149 no later than noon on Thursday before class for reservation

* Sponsored by Desert Art Supplies

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



Ring Made in Silver Smithing Class



Stacking Opal Ring Made in Silver Smithing Class



Wire Wrapped Dolphin

Photo Courtesy Charlene Furukowa

Photos Courtesy Bella Romero



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

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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