



# THE POLISHED SLAB

SOUTHERN NEVADA GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY



December 2023

A NEWSLETTER FOR ROCKHOUNDS SINCE 1940

VOLUME 83 ISSUE 12

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**January 4, 2024 - Board Mtg**  
**January 8, 2024 – General Mtg**

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Happy Holidays!!!

The season has arrived and it seems we are all busier than ever. The Annual Awards Banquet was fun and everyone had a good time.

The final results are in and our Viva Las Vegas Rocks show was a huge success. We predicted a profit of \$7000. However thanks to all the efforts of our volunteers, we cleared a little over \$10,000. We will be asking for a vote on whether we should do it again next fall at the January 8, 2024 meeting. Over 90% of our vendors have already asked about another show, and Orville Weimers has volunteered to be the committee chair if the SNGMS membership approves the event.

Orville Weimers also volunteered to head up the 2024 Spring Jamboree event in Boulder City. The first Jamboree meeting is January 5, 2024 at Desert Art Supplies in Henderson, Nevada at 4 pm. We have many vendor inquiries for this show.

This year has seen an increase in membership and lots of fun and activities. More is planned for 2024, so watch for notices of events and classes. By the way, if you have a skill you'd like to teach, please contact a board member about setting up a class (see page 12 for contact information). If there's a rock hounding trip you'd like to lead, we welcome you to talk to us!!

Chops Wenzl has taken over the SNGMS Lapidary Shop Manager position. Thank you to Andrea Kincannon for her time as the Shop Manager! Mary Beth Paladino will take on the Sunshine club duties for now. Please contact her with member's news and happenings at 702-255-1647.

Many Board members stayed in their positions however, David Ford became our new Treasurer, Bruce Martin our 1 year member, and Jean Cheyette is our new 3 year Board member. Please congratulate them.

Gotta run! Presents to wrap, lights to hang, and cookies to bake! See you in the rocks!

Andrea Packo  
SNGMS President

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2024 Field Trips<sup>1</sup> & Events (more on page 4)

Field Trip <sup>1</sup> /Event	Date	Location
Purple Agate Trip <sup>1</sup>	TBD	Burro Creek, AZ

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

**VICTOR VALLEY GEM AND MINERAL CLUB**  
 Invites you to their  
 48th Annual  
 Stoddard Wells Rockhound Tailgate  
 Victorville, California  
 Friday—Sunday  
 March 8-10, 2024  
 9:00am to 5:00pm Daily

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

FREE Event!      FREE Vendor Spaces  
 Dry Camping      Restrooms  
 Silent Auction      Grab Bags  
 Spin the Wheel and more...

All donations are gladly accepted to help Offset expenses!

Come visit us for Handcrafted and Faceted Jewelry, Slabs and Cabs, Findings and Equipment, Minerals and Fossils, TONS of Rough Material and LOT S of surprises.

Saturday FAMILY Field Trip: 9 am to 1 pm  
 We'll be collecting Tri-color marble!  
 Verde Antiques is less than 1 mile from area !!

For more info visit our website at vvgms.org  
 Or call 760-243-2330 and leave a message

**Directions**  
 From I-15 N towards Barstow: Hwy 15 N THRU Victorville. EXIT Rt. at 2<sup>nd</sup> Stoddard Wells at Bell Mtn, Exit 157. Turn left/east at ramp Stop sign. Stay on Stoddard Wells Rd 4 mi until next Stop sign at Dale Evans Pkwy. "Tailgate" signs high on NW corner power pole. **Check odometer here!** Continue straight on Stoddard Wells Rd 7 mi to "Tailgate." Road becomes graded dirt about 0.4 mi from the Dale Evans Pkwy intersection. Proceed East/NE past Grange fork to "Tailgate" site. Cars & RV can make it w/ease & care. "Tailgate" signs along route.

**Joshua Tree Gem & Mineral 2024 Spring Show**

**When:** April 24, 2024 at 9 am - April 28, 2024 at 4 pm

**Where:** Joshua Tree Lake, RV and Campground  
 2601 Sunfair Rd.  
 Joshua Tree, CA

Come out and enjoy the Joshua Tree Gem & Mineral 2024 Spring Show. Free admission, free parking, and fun for all ages. Food vendors on site.

**Quartzsite. Arizona Showcase & Swapmeet  
 January 1 - February 28, 2024**

The Quartzsite, Arizona shows are famous among professional and amateur lapidaries and jewelry artists. The small desert town lies about 18 miles east of the Arizona-California border, and about 250 miles northwest of Tucson. A quiet town of about 3,000 year-round residents, that population explodes during the January-February show, making Quartzsite a vibrant outdoor desert shopping mall. About 3,000 vendors from all over come to Quartzsite to sell virtually anything and everything, including serious dealers (about 500) of rocks, minerals, gems, fossils and jewelry. Of the ten or more shows happening simultaneously there are **four that are strictly rock and mineral related: Desert Gardens Show, QIA Pow Wow, Prospector's Panorama, and Tyson Wells Show.** Prices are notoriously cheap — compared to Tucson, where costs for many of the same items tend to be quite higher. All shows have free admission and parking — though very difficult to find — and no registration is required.

Check here for individual show information:  
[www.xpopress.com/showcase/shows/5/quartzsite-showcase-swapmeet](http://www.xpopress.com/showcase/shows/5/quartzsite-showcase-swapmeet)

**66th Annual Gila County (Arizona) Gem and Mineral Show**

Come join us for the 66th annual Gila County Gem and Mineral Show! The show will be held indoors at the Gila County Fairgrounds, 900 E Fairground Rd, Globe, AZ 85501 on January 12th, 13th & 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024. This will be a fun time for rock and mineral collectors, fossil hobbyist and kids of all ages. The show runs from 9am to 5pm Friday and Saturday and 10am to 4pm Sunday. Students and children are free and \$3.00 per Adult.



## SNGMS Board Meeting Minutes for 11/30/2023

On November 30, 2023, the regular Board of Directors meeting of the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society was called to order at the SNGMS Shop at 6:03 PM by the President. All Board members except Parliamentarian were present. The pledge of allegiance to the flag was recited.

The minutes of the November 2, 2023 SNGMS board meeting were approved as read.

### Treasurer's Report:

Balance of account is \$4563.80. There are 110 tickets purchased for the Awards Banquet and the charges have been paid in full. After meeting with our Wells Fargo Investment advisors, \$100,000 have been invested in six month and one year certificates of deposit. The Ore Car mining claim paperwork is now completely in order.

### SNGMS Lapidary Shop Report:

'D' saw is down and a part has to be fabricated for it. 'E' saw is having an issue with bearings. Lloyd Chayette proposed, seconded by Orville Wiemers and approved by the Board, that a drop saw be purchased for shop use. Chops Wenzl discussed plans for the Shop, which include addressing storage issues and training. General shop issues were discussed by the Board and Peggy Sue Moore proposed, seconded by Lloyd Chayette and approved by the Board, that Chops Wenzl be added to the credit card so that he can make purchases for the shop.

### Unfinished Business:

Andrea Packo updated the Board on the Viva Las Vegas show success. Lloyd Chayette proposed, seconded by Del Walkenshaw, and approved by the Board, that "the same budget as the 2023 show budget be presented to the membership for a 2024 show."

### New Business:

Lloyd Chayette nominated Mike Kirk for Lifetime Membership and it will be presented to the General Membership for approval at the January meeting.

The Board approved purchase of up to \$500 in gift cards for the Kids Club Awards Party.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

### Did You Know?

There is a suggestion box at the SNGMS Lapidary Shop. It is on the side of the lockers in the back left corner of the shop as you face the American flag. Please feel free to contribute your suggestions about how to improve anything SNGMS-related.



**FREE Geology and Mineral Book Bonanza!**

A geological treasure trove! We're giving away an extensive collection of Geology and Mineral books that will leave you awestruck. Dive into a world of coffee table masterpieces, stunning fossil and minerals, how-to guides, government geological publications, textbooks, historical accounts, and a plethora of earth science wonders. Bring your own bag.

**Date:** Saturday, January 13, 2024

**Time:** 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM

**Location:** Pinal Geology and Mineral Museum, 351 North Arizona Blvd., Coolidge, Arizona

**Visit our website at [pinalgeologymuseum.org](http://pinalgeologymuseum.org) for more details.**

It's all free, though donations while you grab your favorite books would be welcome. No pressure! Don't miss this golden opportunity to add to your library and explore the museum. Admission to the museum, the kid's fossil dig, Cullen's Rock and Mineral Dig for Kids, and field trips/tours are always free of charge. Join us for a great day of discovery!

**SNGMS Awards Banquet 2023**

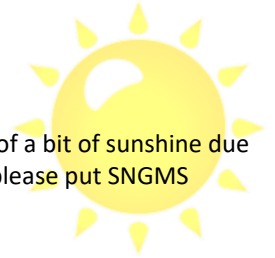
*Thanks to everyone who provided photos!*





# 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).

Phyllis Syzdek died at age 96. Phyllis and her husband Bruno were the historians for the Clark County Gem Collectors (a predecessor to SNGMS) and the SNGMS for a number of years.

## Turquoise, the December Birthstone

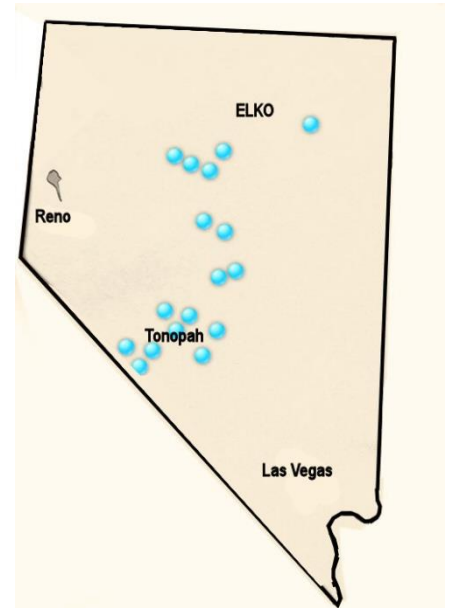


Samples of Nevada Turquoise

In addition to being the December birthstone, turquoise is the SNGMS gemstone, and it's the Nevada State semi-precious gemstone.

The word *turquoise* comes from the French phrase *pierre turquoise* which means "Turkish stone." Venetian traders bought stones in Turkey, but the stones probably came from Iran or Egypt.

Turquoise is hydrated copper and aluminum. It forms near the surface of copper deposits, usually less than 66 feet deep. It is created when aluminum in groundwater percolates through copper. Turquoise usually forms in iron-rich limonite or sandstone. These host minerals (called the matrix) leave veins or splotches on the turquoise.



Nevada Turquoise Mining Areas

Nevada is a major turquoise producer. Fourteen of Nevada's 16 counties have turquoise mines. Generally, Nevada sites are mined for their turquoise and turquoise is not a by-product of other mining. Most deposits are on a band of tectonic activity between Elko and Tonopah. There are approximately four areas in Clark County where turquoise occurs: the Las Vegas mining district, Crescent mining district, Potosi Mountain area, and Goodsprings.



Crescent Peak Mine Turquoise  
Clark County, NV

Turquoise is soft (less than 6 on Mohs scale), and opaque. The color range includes blues and greens, and turquoise can be spotted or veined. A stone called "White Buffalo Turquoise" is mined in Tonopah, Nevada by the Otteson family. It is magnesite and aluminite. It is not turquoise.

In the lapidary world, there are two types of turquoise: natural and stabilized. Natural turquoise is hard enough to cut into gems without stabilization or enhancement. Stabilized turquoise is soft, low grade, turquoise that has been soaked or pressure-cooked with clear epoxy or plastic filler. This hardens the stone so it can be cut, polished, and set in jewelry.

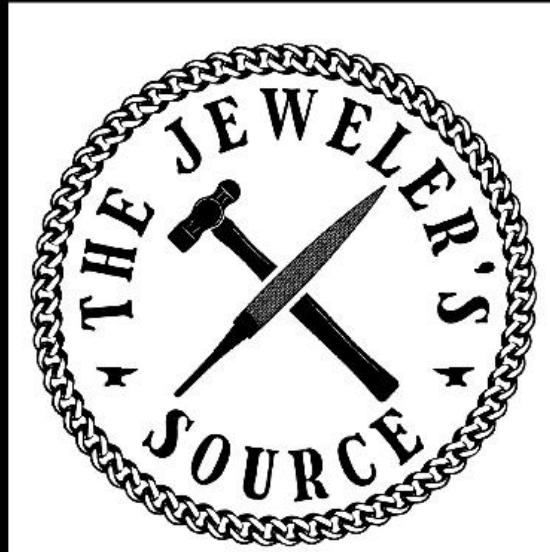


Turquoise Before Stabilization



Turquoise After Stabilization





Members Receive 5% Off

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

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7022 West Charleston Blvd.  
Las Vegas, NV 89117

702-745-1127

[thejewelerssource@gmail.com](mailto:thejewelerssource@gmail.com)

IG - thejewelerssource



SNGMS Meeting Schedules and Lapidary Shop Hours

SNGMS 2024 Meeting Schedule			
Board Meeting <sup>1</sup>	General Meeting <sup>2</sup>	Mineral Group Meeting <sup>3</sup>	Kids Club Meeting <sup>4</sup>
Jan. 4	Jan. 8	Jan 10	2nd Sunday of every month (unless it falls on a holiday) from 3pm - 5pm
Feb. 1	Feb. 5	Feb. 7	
Feb. 29	Mar. 4	Mar. 14	
Mar. 28	Apr. 1	Apr. 10	
May 2	May 6	May 8	
May 30	Jun. 3	Jun. 12	
Jun. 27	Jul. 1	Jul. 10	
Aug. 1	Aug. 5	Aug. 14	
Sep. 5	Sep. 9		
Oct. 3	Oct. 7		
Oct. 31	Nov. 4		
Dec. 5	Dec. – no general mtg, Awards Banquet		

1) Location and time announced via email

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, 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.

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

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 - 7 pm in December 2023**  
**SHOP EQUIPMENT FEES:**

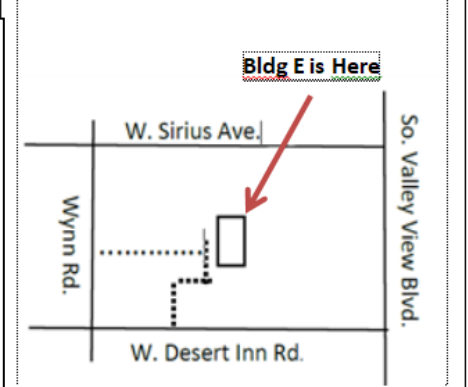
All equipment is \$6/hour. Machines are metered, so you only pay for the time the equipment is actually running.

SHOP CLOSED:

Kids Club: 3- 5 pm 2nd Sunday of the Month. Board Mtg: Various Thursdays 6-7 pm

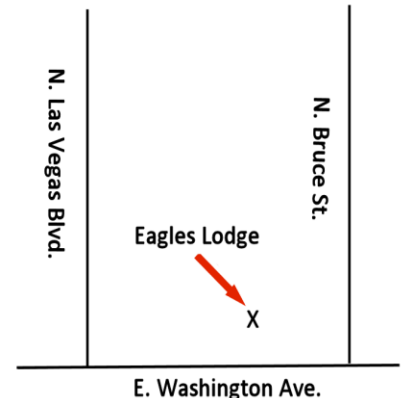
**\*Check Email and "Polished Slab" for possible date changes.**

SNGMS Lapidary Shop Locator Map



Eagles Lodge Locator Map

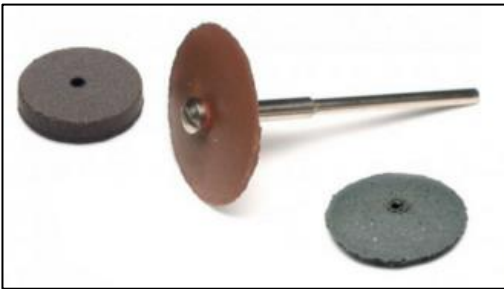
Eagles Lodge #1213  
1601 E Washington Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89101



### Lapidary/Jewelry Studio Tips & Tricks Shaping, Drilling, and Polishing Amber

Amber is fossilized tree resin. It is not a mineral. It has a hardness of 2-3 on the Mohs scale and can be polished (and scratched!) easily. If dropped on a hard surface, amber may break, chip, or shatter. It may melt or soften if exposed to chemicals like alcohols. Amber will darken over time as it reacts with air and oxidizes.

#### Cutting and Shaping Amber



Craytex Wheels

If you are so fortunate to have a piece of amber large enough to cut, use a water saw. Shape it with files, or sanding barrels or Craytex wheels on a Dremel or a flexshaft. If you use a Dremel or flexshaft, run at LOW speed to prevent the piece from getting hot and melting. After shaping, use aluminum oxide paper of finer and finer grades (200, 400, and 600 grit) to smooth the surface of the amber until a polish step is necessary.



Raw Amber

<https://folkmarketgems.com>

#### Drilling Amber

Drilling can be done with a Dremel or flexshaft using a twist drill bit. A No. 62 twist drill is often used to partially or completely pierce a piece of amber to insert a screw-eye or pass a beading string through it. Work slowly but firmly, and try to drill straight through the piece. If you insert the drill bit a second, time, moisten the bit with vegetable or mineral oil to reduce friction and heat.

#### Polishing Amber

There are several polishing options for amber. These include:

- tripoli with oil
- aluminum oxide
- tin oxide
- Linde A
- jeweler's rouge, applied dry
- Brasso
- Turtle Wax.

To polish, dip the amber piece into a lubricant (oil or water) and then dip the piece into the polishing compound. Rub vigorously on a smooth surface such as a leather strop, or a chamois attached to a board. A buffing machine may heat the piece too much, causing it to melt or soften.

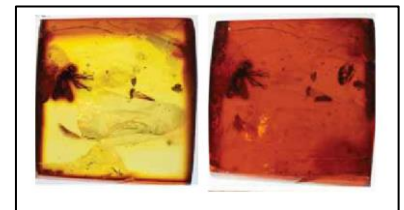


Polished Amber Earrings

[www.meandrojewelry.com](http://www.meandrojewelry.com)

#### Refreshing Oxidized Amber

To bring back the shine on oxidized amber, hand-polish the pieces with toothpaste on a lightly moistened microfiber cloth. Work over a towel so you don't make a mess. Remove the toothpaste from the piece by dipping it in water and gently brushing with a soft toothbrush. Finally, rub a drop of olive oil or coconut oil into the amber to help prevent it from drying out. Wipe off any excess oil with a soft tissue.



Left to right: Amber before and after oxidation





2023 Cabochon Contests

MONTH	CABOCHON THEME	CONTEST WINNER
January	Rainbow Trout	Lloyd Chayette & Bruce Martin tied
February	Lion Fish	Lloyd Chayette 1 <sup>st</sup> George Stewart 2 <sup>nd</sup>
March	Clown Fish	Lloyd Chayette 1 <sup>st</sup> Bruce Martin 2 <sup>nd</sup>
April	Jellyfish	Ron Mazz 1 <sup>st</sup> Bruce Martin 2 <sup>nd</sup>
May	Lobster	Lloyd Chayette 1 <sup>st</sup> Joel Coombs 2 <sup>nd</sup>
June	Starfish	Lloyd Chayette 1 <sup>st</sup> , Ron Mazz 2 <sup>nd</sup>
July	Octopus	Bruce Martin 1 <sup>st</sup> , George Stewart 2 <sup>nd</sup>
August	Seahorse	George Stewart & Bruce Martin tied
September	Coral	Ron Mazz 1 <sup>st</sup> , Lloyd Chayette 2 <sup>nd</sup>
October	Shark	Joel Coombs 1 <sup>st</sup> , Lloyd Chayette & Ron Mazz tied for 2 <sup>nd</sup>
November	Whales	Joel Coombs 1 <sup>st</sup> , Lloyd Chayette 2 <sup>nd</sup>
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 January 2024 cabochon theme is "Snow." **Good Luck!**



Snow

Igloos photo by <https://tinyhouseblog.com>  
Las Vegas photo by <https://travelingmooses.com>

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

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

**Lewis and Clark: Rockhounding on the Way to the Pacific**

The American Federation of Mineralogical Societies created a **FREE** traveler's guide to the rocks, minerals, and fossils along the Lewis and Clark Trail. Two versions of this document are available: one optimized for viewing on the electronic device of your choice, and a version that is optimized for printing. To download the pdf files, go to [www.amfed.org/lewisclark.htm](http://www.amfed.org/lewisclark.htm). Enjoy!



SNGMS Member Heather Perkins  
At First Friday Event in Las Vegas  
Photo Courtesy Eric Cifani



**BIRTHDAYS**

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

**DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS**



*Debra Altergott, Eric Bakke, Karen Barrett, Karly Beaston, Reginald Beatty, Bob Belcher, Tracey Bina, John Brooks, Blake Cardinal, Michael Carroll, Bailey Curley, Cindy Dare, Tony Duran, Mark Fernandes, Shannon Funk, Song Hageman, Chris Hall, Amy Michelle Hall, Shane Hayes, Noel Helwig, Mona Howell, Randy Huffine, Tom Kidwell, Nicholas Lash, John Lauby, Paula Lawlor, Clark LeFevre, Kevin Lewis, Robert Madow, Melissa Marks, Christina Martinez, Azhia McCord, Kathryn McCorkell, Gordon McDonald, John Miller, Anatalia Muniz, Matthew Newman, Julia Paladino, Stephen Palecek, Stanley Parente Hahn, Michael Parry, Ysidro Rodriguez, Sharon Rogow, Carter Sanford, Kay Scheel, Timothy Smith, Bart Solomon, Brenden Storck, Doug Storseth, Frances Stratton, Justen Sudberry, Lorraine Syddall, Marcia Taylor, Dan B. Toney, Jr., Toni Tyson, Del Walkenshaw, Gary Webb, Peter Welty, C.T. Yu, Laurie Zeigler*

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

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

*Cindy Allison, Stella C. Andrecheck, Marisa Bars, Jessica Casero, Janelle Cook, Cheyanne Crum, Sally Davis, Terry Dehn, Heidi Dietrich, Joanna Emmett, Sandra Fairchild, Justine Frederick, Myrna Gagnier, William Greenway, Ed Haase, Cody Hargis, David C. Jones, Reggie Jose, Randall Kesselring, Krystal LaHaye, Michael Landreth, Roger Lane, Capricha Lane, Franklin Brody Lane, Justun Alan Lane, Pamela Lauby, John Lauby, Clark LeFevre, Stacey LeFevre, Ellie LeFevre, Brooklyn LeFevre, Landin LeFevre, Ezra LeFevre, Harder LeFevre, River LeFevre, Luwana Masteller, Karen Maupin, Osra O'Neal, Maurice Owens, Angie Owens, Cora Peterson, Robert Peterson, Aaron Pokorney, Tina Pokorney, Aaron Posey, Ananaka Rau, Juliette Richardson, Donald E. Ricketts, Edith Ricketts, Marisa Robinson, Jason Rossi, Angelina Rossi, Elon Rossi, Evelyn Rossi, Genevieve Rossi, Jason Rossi, Vivian Rossi, Janie Sherwood, Aaron Ray Simpson, Nancy Simpson, Cindy Stordahl, Rochelle Surette, Caleb Tharp, Holly Thiry, Emily Volk, T.J. Vrchota, Charla Vrchota, Ronnie Wakefield, Anthony Wakefield, Socorro Walker, Dennis Walker, Debbra Weibert, Richard Weibert, Lee Wittenberg*

**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 sessions last about 2 hours and 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
January 7, 2024	10 a.m.	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary Shop 3111 South Valley View Blvd, Building E Shop Suite 125 Las Vegas NV 89102
January 21, 2024			
February 4, 2024			
February 18, 2024			



**SNGMS Rock Stars Kids Club  
2024 Field Trips and Meetings<sup>1</sup>**

Field Trip/Meeting	Date	Location
No Meeting – Holiday Party and Awards Ceremony <sup>2</sup>	December 16, 2023 12:00 - 2:00 pm	Fraternal Order of Eagles 1601 E. Washington Ave. Las Vegas, NV 89101
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting – Fossils Merit Badge	January 14, 2024, 3 – 5 pm	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>3</sup>
Field Trip – Digging for Trilobites at Frenchman Mountain	February 11, 2024, 1 – 4 pm	Meet at Frenchmen Mountain, Lake Mead Blvd.
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting – Fluorescents Merit Badge	March 10, 2024, 3 – 5 pm	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>3</sup>
Field Trip	April 14, 2024	TBD
Boulder City Spring Jamboree	May 3 – 5, 2024	Boulder City, Nevada
<b>NO MEETING – MOTHER’S DAY</b>	May 12, 2024	
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting - Earth in Space Merit Badge	June 9, 2024, 3- 5 pm	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>3</sup>
Field Trip - Planetarium	July 14, 2024	More info coming
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting - Special Effects Merit Badge	August 11, 2024, 3 – 5 pm	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>3</sup>
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting - Lapidary Arts Merit Badge	September 8, 2024, 3 – 5 pm	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>3</sup>
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	October 13, 2024, 3- 5 pm	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>3</sup>
Rock Stars Kids Club Meeting	November 10, 2024, 3 – 5 pm	SNGMS Lapidary Shop <sup>3</sup>
<b>NO MEETING – HOLIDAY PARTY DATE TBD</b>	December 8, 2024	

- 1) Field trip destinations, dates, and times are subject to change.
- 2) **RSVP REQUIRED NO LATER THAN FRIDAY DECEMBER 8TH 6:00 PM NO EXCEPTION. RSVP WENDY DRESSER CALL OR TEXT 702-556-2748 (NO EMAIL PLEASE)**
- 3) **3111 South Valley View Blvd., Building E Shop Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102**

**American Federation of Mineralogical Societies Merit Badges 2023**

The following members of the Rock Stars Kids Club earned merit badges in 2023:

Ayotundi Ajayi	Linden Muller
Olamide Ajayi	Henry Nunes
Chayton Beaston	Massimo Piacente
Liam Beaston-Plumeigh	Sofi Piacente
Thomas Boettcher	Elon Rossi
Jaeden Browning	Jason Rossi
Jerome Browning	Vivian Rossi
Genevieve Gentile	Alice Sharrer
Mia Hayes	Elliot Sharrer
Michaela Lash	James Sharrer
Faith McCaw	Gavin Waller
Hope McCaw	



**SNGMS 2024 VOLUNTEER STAFF**

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

**SNGMS 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Secretary	Lorrilee Stackhouse	lorrilee@proton.me	702-817-5602
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Three Year Board	Jean Chayette	chayshanks@yahoo.com	714-474-6384
Past President	Lloyd Chayette	chayette.lloyd@yahoo.com	714-474-6384

**SNGMS 2024 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	Open		
Field Trip	Open	sngmsnews@gmail.com	
Shop Manager	Chops Wenzl		
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New Member Liaison	Joann Spratt		
Program (Speakers)	Romy Umholtz	romyvision@gmail.com	
Publicity	Andrea Packo	sngmspresident@gmail.com	702-279-7679
Raffle/Lottery	Ron Mazz	zman8229@gmail.com	586-914-4130
Refreshments	Open		
Rock Stars	Wendy Dresser	wndresser@gmail.com	702-556-2748
Scholarship	Debbie Bucknam		
Spring Jamboree Show	Orville Wiemers	sngmsjam@gmail.com	
Sunshine	Mary Beth Paladino		702-255-1647
Webmaster	Lorrilee Stackhouse	lorrilee@proton.me	





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**Did You Know?**

The SNGMS Lapidary Shop has a library of books and magazines. The topics range from rock hounding to lapidary and jewelry techniques. The materials can be borrowed by SNGMS members.

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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).



## Mineral Musings

### Ferminia Serras, Nevada's Copper Queen

(Excerpted from "A Mine of Her Own" by Sally Zanjani, ISBN 0-8032-4914-4 and <https://cowgirlmagazine.com/ferminia-serras>)

Ferminia Serras, the Copper Queen of Nevada, was born in Nicaragua in 1840. She was a descendant of an aristocratic Spanish family. In 1876, at age 36, Ferminia came to America with four young daughters. By 1880, the family was living in Nevada, but not together. Ferminia temporarily put her two youngest daughters in an orphanage in Virginia City. She may have made this choice to protect the girls from the rough mining camps where Ferminia intended to go.



With her two older girls, she went to Belleview, then Candelaria. Her oldest daughter married about 1881 and moved to California. That same year, Ferminia gave birth

to a son in Candelaria. Ferminia had more than one lover, and preferred younger men. She carried her newborn son from one mining camp to another.

Ferminia prospected on foot, wearing boots and pants, and carrying a backpack. She became a hard rock miner who was considered by her peers to be a formidable force. Ferminia had a talent for locating valuable ore and was tough enough to defend her mines. The petite, slightly overweight woman carried a six-shooter to deter anyone who considered jumping her claims. Places where Ferminia worked include Belleville, Candelaria, Pickhandle Gulch (aka Metallic City), and Luning (near Tonopah). She made a fortune, but lost it through stocks and bad mining investments. Her generosity may have contributed to her financial stress. She never turned away anyone hungry or destitute.

Her first silver claim was made in the Belleville mining district in April 1883. Her two-year old son was surely left behind while Ferminia was prospecting. The weather that April included gale force winds, rain, and three snowstorms.

By 1885, Ferminia had a homestead at Sand Springs. She also owned a toll road between the town of Tule Canyon (in Esmeralda County, Nevada) and Death Valley. When her mines were not producing, she lived off the money earned from the toll road. In 1888, Ferminia staked copper claims near Luning, Nevada.

In 1902, at age 62, she made 25 new copper claims and owned six mill sites. Investors offered her \$8000 each for 25 claims. Not all of the sales went through, but she made a lot of money. Ferminia began taking trips to San Francisco and Los Angeles. She stayed at fine hotels, bought clothes, and wined and dined herself. When the money was almost spent, she'd say "I guess I'd better get back to the desert." Ferminia gave away her fine clothes, put on her overalls, and went out prospecting again.

In 1905, the Southern Pacific Railroad constructed a new town southeast of Hawthorne.

It was named "Mina" after Ferminia who owned some of the mines in the area. That same year a syndicate bought 40 claims from Ferminia for \$90,000 with an immediate payment of \$40,000 in cash. Ferminia backed out of the deal, claiming in court that the syndicate had taken advantage of her lack of English (probably not true) and business experience. The syndicate gave in, and Ferminia was paid over the next two years. Another sale followed in 1907 for \$65,000.

In 1907, Ferminia's worth was estimated at more than a quarter of a million dollars. With the exception of \$10,000 deposited in a Los Angeles bank, Ferminia hid her money at her homestead. In her 70s, Ferminia took up with a young man of 30. He managed to steal the money in her bank account (but not the rest of her cash!) and ran away to South America with a woman his own age. Ferminia died shortly afterward at age 75. She is buried in Luning, Nevada.



Portrait of Ferminia Serras  
<https://lawsmuseum.org/women-mining-history>



Mina, Nevada

[www.yelp.com/biz/mina-club-mina](http://www.yelp.com/biz/mina-club-mina)



## December 2023 Class Schedule

(see page 10 for New Member Orientation Schedule)

Class	Instructor	Date and Time	Cost	Location	Contact
Beading	Gary Webb & Sue Dobson	<b>NO CLASS in December 2023</b>	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary Shop, 3111 S. Valley View Blvd, Bldg E Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102	
Wire Wrapping	Peggy Sue Moore	Monday, December 18, 2023 at 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	<b>NO CLASS in December 2023</b>	\$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 <b>NO CLASS DEC. 22 or 29, 2023</b>	\$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.**



**Silver and Copper Brooch Made by Silver Smithing Student**

*Photo Courtesy Bella Romero*



Southern Nevada Gem & Mineral Society  
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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  
 Silver Smithing

Annual Dues: Individual - \$25; Family - \$35  
 Meetings start 6 pm on the first Monday of the  
 month at:

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No meeting is held in December. Instead we have  
 our annual awards dinner.

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