



THE POLISHED SLAB

SOUTHERN NEVADA GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY



August 2026

A NEWSLETTER FOR ROCKHOUNDS SINCE 1940

VOLUME 86 ISSUE

President's Message - Tyra Tripp

Change is inevitable. Growth is optional. - John C. Maxwell

In an attempt to attract new members and younger members, we must implement new, more efficient, mindful and cost-effective ways to do things while keeping in mind protection of the club both from a liability standpoint as well as a financial standpoint. You will see exciting changes coming from shop cleanup and updates to streamlined online membership. I need to extend sincere appreciation for some of our newest changes.

Our membership committee has been spending a great deal of time selecting the best membership management software. Huge thanks to Claudia Crouse, Lorrilee Stackhouse, Mary Savage, Ralph Voelker, and Sara Treadwell.

We are past the days of PA system difficulties. Special thanks to Timothy Ruzic. He provided the brain power to select our upgraded PA system. This system will make it so much easier to hear during general meetings and a great improvement during our shows. Thank you, Timothy, for another step into the future for our club.

While I'm on a roll, please be sure to thank your engineering crew and shop supervisors. They are the ones who keep the shop running smoothly every week. Without them, there would be no shop.

At the July general meeting I was asked how to get a name badge. Name badges are only \$10. If you would like to have a name badge, print your information on paper and specify if you want a pin back or magnetic back. Put the paper and \$10 in an envelope and write "name badge" on the outside of the envelope. Put the envelope in the membership box at the rear of the shop. The benefits of having a name badge are: 1) you get TWO door prize tickets if you wear your badge to a general meeting, 2) people like me who can never remember names can call you by name, 3) if you forget to take it off when you stop somewhere on the way home, perfect strangers can call you by name. That always surprises me.

The club loves feedback and ideas. A good practice to follow if you disagree with a change or something new that's implemented, is to share your thoughts in a constructive manner. Choosing words that are non-confrontational and providing a solution along with your disagreement, changes the tone and perspective of your feedback. Change is good and needed to move the club forward. The adage of "That's how we've always done it" is a good way to get stuck in old ways and prevents us personally and the club from moving forward. I welcome all ideas. Please email or call me with your ideas. - Tyra

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SNGMS Board Meeting August 31, 2026
SNGMS General Meeting September 14, 2026
SNGMS Kids Club Meeting September 13, 2026

Brad's Bench Tips

DRILL BREAKAGE

Using a small drill is difficult for a beginner, especially if it's handheld in a flex shaft or a Dremel. Bits can easily break with too much pressure or if they tilt a little while in the hole.

Most problems, however, are the result of buying cheap drills that suffer from poor quality steel and/or inaccurately ground cutting edges. A good drill from jewelry supply companies is well worth the price.

Remember that drilling always goes easier with lubrication. A little wax or oil is all that's needed. Almost anything will work - Three and One, beeswax, mineral oil, injection wax, car oil, olive oil, or one of the commercial cutting waxes. The lubricant helps to move chips out of the hole and reduces friction of the drill against the side of the hole, keeping the drill cooler.

FIND THE BALANCE POINT

With odd-shaped pendants or earrings it's often difficult to find the right place to attach a bail or loop so that the piece is balanced and hangs straight. A quick way to make a tool for this is to modify a set of tweezers.

Any set of tweezers will work. Spread the tips, sharpen them with a file, and bend the tips at a right angle to point towards each other. To use the tool, suspend the pendant or earring between two sharp points to see if it hangs



Sunshine Report

If you know of any SNGMS member with an event to celebrate (wedding, anniversary, etc.) or who needs a bit of sunshine due to accident, illness, etc., please text Beth Jones at 702-505-5819.

Jeweler's Store/Shop Closing

Are you in need of a workbench or jewelry making tools and equipment at a great price? A recent jewelry store closure has provided the opportunity to purchase 10 used work benches as well as used tools and equipment at great prices. Please reach out to Blake at The Jeweler's Source or stop by his store to take advantage of these great deals. 7022 West Charleston, Las Vegas, NV 702-745-1127 – thejewelerssource@gmail.com



Kids Club Update

Over the summer, the Kids Club has been going strong with learning and exploring. During June, the kids learned about Earth's natural resources, their uneven distribution, and the importance of minerals in our daily lives. The Club visited the Kids Discovery Museum in July, where everyone had the chance to explore and play. Unknowingly, they applied physics throughout the museum and, at the top level, leveraged their natural resource knowledge from June to examine Las Vegas's technological infrastructure.

The final Kids Club meeting before the start of the school year will be a special class. We will discuss the time we have spent with our senior club members and the knowledge they have shared with us. This will be an important time to reflect on the passing of information from one generation to the next.

-Thomas

2026 Field Trips* & Events

Field Trip ¹ /Event	Date	Location
Brenda Jasper and Smoky Quartz	August 23, 2026	Brenda, AZ ** See below information
Blush Falls Quartz and Pastelite	September 5 and 6th, 2026	Henderson, NV ** See below information
Amethyst	October TBA	Purple Blessings Mine, CA
Jasper and Agate	October TBA	Cactus Joe Mine, Blue Diamond, NV
Viva Las Vegas Rocks! Gem & Mineral Show	Nov. 6 - 8, 2026	Santa Fe Station Casino, Las Vegas, NV
Awards Banquet	Dec 6, 6 pm - 10 pm	Las Vegas National Golf Club, 1911 Desert Inn Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89169

*Field trip destinations, dates, and times are subject to change. Contact Jonathan Tredwell 725-377-0166

RSVP for each of the below field trips to Jonathan at fieldtrip@sngms.net or 725-377-0166.

RSVP one week prior. Brenda Claim RSVP by Aug 17th, Blush Falls RSVP by Aug 30th.

	FIELD TRIP Brenda Gypsy Treasures Claim AUGUST 23, 2026
MATERIAL: Red and Yellow Jaspers (with Agate Plume), Smokey Quartz, Moss Agate, RED WHITE AND BLUE "BRENDA JASPER", Gypsum (Satin Spar), purple Rhyolite... and MORE	
EXTRACTION/TOOLS: Backpack/buckets/bags, Rock Hammer, gloves and walking sticks are helpful. Wear sturdy footwear and long pants. The Cholla like to "bite", PLEASE BRING a metal fork for prick removals.	
TERRAIN: Surface collection from the flat parking area to the steep mountains. Navigating around larger lava rock. CHOLLA cactus galore.	
VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS: Any	
FEE: \$20 per person, no collection limit	
LUNCH: Bring water, snacks and lunch.	
MEET LOCATION: PILOT Travel Center 48286 Vicksburg Rd., Salome, AZ 85348	
MEET TIME: 8:00 am DEPART TIME: Will vary on attendance	Location is approximately 20 minutes from PILOT.

Meet up for **Blush Falls Mine**: 7:00 am each day at 1700 Casino Rd, Henderson. Normal vehicle access, 2WD truck will make it; 4x4 not needed. Carpooling is strongly suggested due to limited parking. RSVP with full name SNGMS membership, and day preference. If you can drive and take passengers, please include in RSVP





BLUSH FALLS
— MINE —
NEVADA

LOCATED IN HENDERSON, NV

WHAT YOU'LL DISCOVER:

**PINK JASPER
AMETHYST
QUARTZ
AND MANY MORE!**



JOIN OUR DIG LIST TO STAY INFORMED ABOUT UPCOMING PAY-TO-DIG EVENTS AND NEW DIG DATES.

INFO@ROCKHOUDINGNATION.COM
WWW.BLUSHFALLSMINE.COM

SNGMS Board Meeting Minutes for July 27, 2026

The SNGMS board meeting convened at 4:00 pm with the pledge of allegiance. All board members were present. The minutes for the June 29, 2026, SNGMS board meeting were read and approved as read.

Treasurer's Report: \$13,356 was spent to cover costs for the Viva Las Vegas Gem and Mineral Show. The investment account increased by \$120 due to short-term interest accrual.

Unfinished Business: Roberts Rules Review: Tyra Tripp reminded board meeting attendees that members can raise their hand to ask for permission to speak.

Security System Update: Tyra Tripp reported that Vivant, the security camera vendor, offered SNGMS a \$30 per month protection plan that covers the cost of two service calls. Labor and travel time by a technician are covered, but not equipment parts or replacement. Service calls are normally \$100 each. Vivant does not provide camera warranties. The plan is not required, it is optional. The SNGMS board decided to decline the protection plan.

Membership Technology Update: Ralph Voelker presented the findings of the membership committee regarding software to assist the Membership Chair, Claudia Crouse. Most software packages were too expensive, but two options were identified; 1) Join It, an off-the-shelf software package and 2) custom software to be written by Lorrilee Stackhouse, the SNGMS webmaster. Both programs allow: online joining to avoid problems reading handwriting and ensure complete data collection, online payments, manual renewals for members who don't want to renew online, and membership autorenewals. Currently, the Membership Chair physically collects paper membership application forms from the Lapidary and Education Center (LEC), flattens the papers, and scans them. The forms are frequently incomplete, and the liability form is often missing. Gift membership is also a problem, and the wrong amount of money is often paid. The goal of membership software is to reduce errors and allow members to join immediately. Event registration is possible, but first step is to deploy online memberships. Tyra Tripp did not contact the insurance company to determine if a digital signature is required for the liability forms. Dave Ford will follow up on this question. The pros of "Join It" are technical support with configuration assistance. The recommendation is to use the Extra package offered by Join It for two months to get configuration help, then revert to the Total package on an annual basis to leverage discounted costs. Using off-the-shelf software allows the Membership Chair to move away from data tracking to member recruitment. The vendor is responsible for software updates. Join It has a 10-year track record, 3000 customers, and over 1 million records managed by the software. No software is installed locally. Digital membership cards, immediate membership verification, welcome letters, and email notifications are all part of Join It. The cons of Join It are the cost. Tyra Tripp reviewed the quotes for Join It software. Two levels will meet SNGMS's needs; the Total package and the Extra package. A handout summarizing the costs was provided. Members renewing online would pay an extra transaction cost of about 52 cents. The board consensus was that a package to support 1000 members is needed. The board consensus is that rolling membership years are beneficial for Join It and a custom application. Peggy Sue Moore commented that the SNGMS bylaws must be amended to implement rolling memberships.

There is a discussion about whether an increase in membership fees is needed. The consensus is no increase is needed. Tyra Tripp reviewed the cost of two months of the Join It Extra plan, followed by a year of the Total plan. The advantage of the Extra plan is decreased per transaction fees and a dedicated implementation specialist. Lorrilee Stackhouse does not believe a specialist is needed. Ralph Voelker continued with the Join It cons discussion and explained that at the present time, member addresses, phone numbers, etc. are exposed when looking up membership status. For these reasons, LEC supervisors will continue to need edited paper copies (or spreadsheets). Lorrilee Stackhouse stated she does not believe that Join IT can handle SNGMS family membership requirements.

Ralph Voelker presented the pros and cons analysis of custom software. On the pro side, the code can be edited

as needed. On the con side, SNGMS has no control over software changes to components like Wix, Windows, Access, Google Sheets and Zeffy upon which the custom code relies. Changes to the components may break the custom code. The code has only one developer, Lorrilee Stackhouse, which is a single point of failure since there is no developer backup for her. The custom app is not cloud based. There is a discussion of who is responsible if there is a data breach and confidential member information is exposed. Ralph Voelker asked if SNGMS has data insurance and no one at the meeting knew. Dave Ford volunteered to check on this with the insurance company and will also ask the insurance company required digital signatures on liability waivers, or if a checkbox is sufficient. Lorrilee Stackhouse confirms the data would be stored locally on a computer with a local copy of Access, and on the SNGMS Google drive. Ralph Voelker moved to amend the SNGMS bylaws to use rolling membership. Orville Wiemers seconded. The proposed amendment was submitted in writing as listed below:

Proposed Amendment of the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral By-Laws

July 27, 2026

Current Wording: Article IX - Membership

Section 4. Membership dues are due and payable January 1 st of every calendar year with a 90-day grace period. Renewal dues paid after January 1 st, but before March 31 st shall require a late fee. The late fees are to ensure that the delinquent member can maintain continuous membership status. Any dues paid from April 1 st forward shall be considered a new membership.

Proposed Wording: Article IX - Membership

Section 4. Membership shall be on a rolling basis. Membership begins on the date a member joins and lasts for one year, after which it must be renewed. There is a 30-day grace period for reinstatement as a continuously enrolled member. If membership is not renewed within the 30-day grace period, continuous membership status is forfeited. This will become effective as part of the implementation of the new membership software program.

Claudia Crouse asked Lorrilee Stackhouse if email campaigns will be possible with the custom software. Lorrilee says yes, with an opt in option for members. Ralph Voelker summarized the software discussion as follows: Off-the-shelf software has better ease of use, and the vendor assumes liability for data breaches and code maintenance. The software can be up and running quickly. Custom software means SNGMS assumes the liability for data breaches and code maintenance. The software has not been beta or load tested and the implementation time is unknown. Tyra Tripp suggested using the custom software and going to Join It if the custom implementation fails. Claudia Crouse stated the original request was to fix a broken membership system. Ralph Voelker emphasized data breach liability is a real issue. Claudia Crouse stated a regular backup of the data is needed. Jonathan Tredwell suggested using Join It since is ready to deploy now, then falling back to the custom app if Join It doesn't work out. Orville Wiemers stated that he views membership software as a launch pad for modernization of SNGMS. Tyra Tripp asked if the software discussion should be continued until next month. Peggy Sue Moore stated a special board meeting could be convened if needed. Tyra Tripp asked for a vote on spending \$1285 on Join It or to use the custom app. Mary Savage explained \$600 in restricted funds are available to apply towards purchase of Join It. Orville Wiemers made a motion to implement the custom application. Dave Ford seconded. The motion passed.

LEC Certification and Merchandise: Mike Yslas emphasized the importance of training members to use LEC equipment. Chops Wenzel asked Mike Yslas to let Chops know what merchandise to purchase for sale at the LEC.

Field Trips: Jonathan Tredwell reported Nate Albrecht is working with Jonathan on scouting field trip locations. Two field trips are coming up.

Gem and Mineral Show Updates: For the Spring Jamboree, Boulder City is moving forward with resurfacing the gym floor which means tape on the floor for electrical cables will not be allowed. Orville Wiemers decided to open early bird reservations for portions of the gym that will not be affected by the tape prohibition. He is investigating solutions that

SNGMS can deploy without relying on Boulder City. Orville discussed a change in strategy for recruiting Jamboree volunteers. He stated there are enough volunteers for the day of the event, but not enough for planning. In 2027, SNGMS members who purchase vendor booths will be asked to participate in the planning.

Awards Banquet: Chops Wenzl asked who is printing the banquet tickets. Lorrilee Stackhouse commented that tickets can be sold online via the SNGMS web site, and that no physical tickets would be needed. Chops stated this won't work for everyone since some members don't use the web site. Tickets are scheduled to go on sale at the first general membership meeting in October. Mike Yslas asked if online ticket sales would be available by October. Ralph Voelker mentioned the need to coordinate the sale of physical and digital tickets to prevent overselling. Tyra Tripp will send the venue capacity to Del Walkenshaw and Chops Wenzl. Lorrilee Stackhouse will track the number of online ticket sales. Orville Wiemers stated Eventbrite is not an option for ticket sales because the banquet is members-only and Eventbrite sells to the public.

Public Address System: Tyra Tripp asked for authorization to spend \$250 on a new public address system for general meetings. There was a brief discussion of this topic, then Orville Wiemers moved to authorize \$500 for purchase of new public address equipment, Ralph Voelker seconded, and the motion carried.

Boulder City Wurst Festival: Tyra Tripp mentioned there will be a wurst festival at Boulder City, Nevada in October 2026.

Rolling Memberships: Ralph Voelker moved to amend the SNGMS bylaws to use rolling memberships as described above. Orville Wiemers seconded, the motion carried. The proposed amendment will be presented at the September 2026 general meeting.

OLEC Cleanup: Ralph Voelker explained for the cleanup, it will be necessary to move as much stuff off the floor and away from the walls for painting. Tyra Tripp has an offer from a cleaning company to clean the LEC for \$300 which will cover the labor cost, except for moving stuff in and out of the LEC which would be the responsibility of SNGMS. Ralph suggested using a U-Haul truck as temporary storage. Ralph Voelker suggested asking Lisa Wiemers, Jill Voelker, and Heather Perkins to select paint colors and distributed a project list. Jonathan Tredwell suggested using a Devil Dog Lacrosse pre-game gem and mineral show as a fundraiser. All other agenda items were postponed until the next SNGMS board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm and went into executive session.



Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society - General Meeting Minutes - August 3, 2026

The SNGMS General meeting began at 6:02 pm. The pledge of allegiance was recited. New members were introduced and visitors were acknowledged. Members were asked to indicate if they had items for Show and Tell. A door prize drawing was held. The secretary read the July 6, 2026, General Meeting Minutes. The minutes were accepted as read.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Dave Ford was absent; Tyra Tripp reported the checking account balance decreased by \$12,300. The investment account increased by \$120 due to interest accrual. There were no changes in investments.

Kids Club: Thomas Boes reported he is no longer able to attend general meetings due to a schedule conflict. Wendy Dresser will provide future Kids Club reports. At the August 9, 2026, Kids Club meeting, the kids will work on the "Reaching Across Generations" badge. The meeting starts at 3 pm at the SNGMS Lapidary and Education Center (LEC).

LEC Report: Orville Wiemers reported one trim saw blade is damaged and has not been replaced. It was bent due to abuse and poses a safety risk to users. If you damage a blade, report it to the LEC supervisor. Surveillance video showed the person who discovered the damage, but not who caused it. Joel Coombs commented the damage may have been caused by an attempt to cut a rock that was too big for the saw. Orville emphasized the importance of reporting damage. The blade cost \$80 - \$90, and it was only used for two weeks before being damaged.

There will be an LEC cleanup in September 2026.

Field Trips: Jonathan Tredwell reported there will be a field trip on August 23, 2026, to Brenda, Arizona to collect Brenda jasper and smokey quartz. There will be a trip from September 5 – 6 to the Blush Falls Mine in Henderson, Nevada to collect quartz and pastelite. The first 2.5-gallon bucket of rocks is free, and you can bring power tools to collect. Mine is 30 minutes from Las Vegas. Jonathan is working on a trip to the Cactus Joe mine near Goodsprings, Nevada for October 2026. Del Walkenshaw is working on scheduling a trip to Tonopah, Nevada to collect turquoise. Orville Wiemers discussed a potential trip to the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum to view a mineral exhibit. The cost of a bus is \$4000. Including museum admission, the cost per person for 40 people is about \$120, and the cost per person for 50 people is about \$100. October 24, 2026, is the proposed date due to the bus schedule. The exhibit closes on April 19, 2027. Contact Orville (orville.wiemers@sngms.net) to reserve a slot.

Speaker: Tyra Tripp introduced Peter Welty who spoke about faceting stones and gave a demonstration of total internal reflection. Wendy Dresser commented that Peter will demonstrate faceting at the SNGMS Viva Las Vegas Rocks gem and mineral show in November 2026.

Classes: Joel Coombs stated he is offering cabochon making classes at the LEC.

Birthdays: Tyra Tripp led the audience to sing Happy Birthday.

Federation Report: Mary Beth Paladino reported on her attendance at the Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies (RMFMS) meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma last month. She discussed field trips she attended and offered to provide GPS coordinates to members interested in collecting fossils from one of the sites, assuming you have permission from a landowner to cross their property. Mary Beth gave some tips on how to clean and treat fossils to maximize their visual impact. She conducted a quiz about her presentation and offered fossils collected during the Tulsa field trips as prizes. The gem and mineral museum at Oral

Roberts University in Tulsa was largely donated by Willard Elsing. The museum is named after Elsing and the collection is worth seeing, says Mary Beth. Mary Beth also discussed the D.W. Correll Museum in Catoosa, Oklahoma which has

mining exhibits and activities for kids, and a lapidary workshop. The Miami Mining Expo will take place in Globe, Arizona on October 2-3, 2026. Spiking and mucking competitions will be featured. Mary Beth admired the display cases at the RMFMS convention and hopes SNGMS will have cases at the SNGMS Spring Jamboree Show. Mary Beth discussed the kid's newsletter sponsored by RMFMS, "Crack the Egg," and hopes that SNGMS kids will participate. Wendy Dresser commented that there have been two articles in "Crack the Egg" by SNGMS kids. Steve Kaminski is the new RMFMS president. Recruitment for a new RMFMS representative for Arizona/Nevada is underway. The RMFMS convention shows will be in: Logan, Utah (2027); Scottsdale, Arizona (2028), and Cedar City, Utah (2029). Mary Beth thanked Janelle Hopkins for making ribbons for RMFMS awards.

Cabochon Contest: First place was entry Number 6 by Joel Coombs, and second place was entry Number 5 by George Stewart.

Awards Banquet: Tyra Tripp reported tickets will go on sale October 1, 2026. The banquet will be held on Dec 6, 2026, from 6-10 pm at the Las Vegas National Golf Club, 1911 E Desert Inn Rd, Las Vegas, NV 89169. Chops Wenzl will sell tickets at the general meeting and at the LEC on Wednesday mornings starting in October 2026. Email Tyra Tripp (president@sngms.net) with questions and she will have answers at the September 2026 general meeting, including ticket prices.

Bylaws Amendment: Tyra Tripp explained that Lorrilee Stackhouse is writing a membership computer program for SNGMS. Converting memberships from an annual basis to a rolling basis will help with the development. Tyra Tripp asked for a motion to change the SNGMS bylaws and standing rules to make the change. Orville Wiemers made the motion, seconded by Lloyd Chayette. There was no motion for approval. The proposed change will be published in "The Polished Slab" newsletter in August 2026, with a vote on the issue in September 2026. There was discussion about auto renewing memberships, membership renewal notices, how membership status will be verified at the LEC, early membership payments, and processing paper membership applications and renewals. Tyra Tripp will provide information on these topics at the September 2026 SNGMS general meeting. Members were asked to email questions to Tyra (president@sngms.net).

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm.



If you have an August birthday, please bring something for the refreshment table at August's meeting.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS – HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

John Adams, Morgan Aittama, Sandy Anderson, Michael Arguello, Nyeisha Boes, Suzi Butkus, Tina Collins, Joann DeJonge, Quinn Dresser, Raymond Eash, Robert Eisenberg, Eva Fleming, Ken Foster, Carole Frost, Scott Frost, Jennifer Grant, Kathleen Greene, Jeff Greenwood, Becky Harris, Jana Hassett, Kelly Henderson, Travis Holden, Gerald (Jerry) Hooton, Steve Hopkins, Debora Johnson, Joy Justice, Paul Kaspar, Laura Labb, Gail Lehtinen, Dora Lucero, Louis Luffin, Marie Maleske, Natasha Matkin-Hayes, Thomas McBride, Steven McCaw, Tim McKenna, Priscilla Messenger, Michelle Muniz, Don Navin, Catherine O'Rourke, Emily Osgood, Kirk Overby, Andy Price, Jessica Ramos, Andria Reichel, Tara Robb, Audry Romans, Norman Rosensteel, Dayton Ruff, Mary Savage, Nick Sharrer, Susan Sharrer, Mario Small, Joann Sprott, Cristy Strong, Phyllis Syzdek, Holly Vensel, David Wangsgard, Debbra Weibert, Rosa H. Westrate, Aaron Wise

Anticlastic Bracelet Class

In July, five members created elegant anticlastic bracelets in a class sponsored by SNGMS. The students were a mix of seasoned jewelers and curious beginners, and all the bracelets they made were fabulous!

Anticlastic forming is a metalworking technique that involves shaping metal into a three-dimensional structure that curves in opposite directions, like a saddle.

Jewelers start with a flat sheet of metal and hammer it against the stake until a beautiful form emerges. There's trial and error, but that's part of the fun! The unique curves of anticlastic bracelets set them apart from traditional flat designs.

The way the metal is shaped can enhance its strength, making it less prone to deformation compared to other styles. Plus, that gentle curvature molds to the wrist comfortably, so you can wear them from a morning coffee run straight through to an evening soirée without a second thought.



Bracelet created by Bud Cranor



Amber Palecek using a Forming Stake

Don't be a Dirty Bird!

Please clean up after yourself at the LEC Shop. When using ANY of the machines and/or saws, be respectful and CLEAN THE MACHINE and/or SAW after use.

This is your shop; leave everything you use in better shape than when you arrive.

- Cab machines – take the trays out, rinse them in the sink and wipe down the machine, surrounding area and mop the floor if applicable. Wiping out the trays with a towel does not constitute cleaning.

- Saws – clean all debris from the saw and wipe off all excess oil residue from the entire saw. Be considerate and take a few minutes to clean the machines properly. Keeping our equipment clean extends the life of the equipment and provides a clean start for the next club member using the machine. If you are unsure how to clean a machine or saw properly, please ask the supervisor on duty.

Thank you in advance!

NOT ACCEPTABLE



ACCEPTABLE





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SNGMS Meeting and Lapidary & Education Center Hours and Location

SNGMS 2026 Meeting Schedule		
Board Meeting ¹	General Meeting ²	Kids Club Meeting ¹
Aug 31, 2026	Sep 14, 2026	Sep 13, 2026
Sep 28, 2026	Oct 5, 2026	Oct 11, 2026
Oct 26, 2026	Nov 2, 2026	Nov 8, 2026
Nov. 23, 2026		
Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet
1) Meets at SNGMS Lapidary and Education Center except field trips and special events 2) Meets at Eagles' Lodge on the 1 st Monday of the month, unless there's a holiday, open to the public Show & Sell 5-6 pm, meeting 6-8 pm		

Please, **under no circumstances**, park in front of Unit 124 or Unit 126 (the units next to the SNGMS Center). 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 & Education Center that is not in front of any unit.

SNGMS LAPIDARY AND EDUCATION CENTER HOURS*

Sunday Closed for general use: Various Classes

Monday Closed for general use: Various Classes

Tuesday 10 am - 7 pm

Wednesday 10 am – 7 pm

Thursday 12 pm - 9 pm

Friday 12 pm - 9 pm

Saturday 1 pm - 7 pm

EQUIPMENT FEES:

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

CENTER CLOSED:

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

***Check Email and newsletter for possible date changes.**

Location of SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center
3111 South Valley View Blvd, Building E, Suite 125
Las Vegas, NV 89102



Monthly Meetings are held at:
Eagles Lodge #1213,
1601 E. Washington Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89101

2026 Cabochon Contests

The SNGMS hosts a cabochon contest at our monthly meetings. A cabochon is a jewelry-ready stone with a visible dome on the front face and a flat backside. Meeting attendees vote on their favorite cab. The first-place award is 2 hours of free shop time, and the second-place winner is 1-hour of free shop time. The 2026 SNGMS Cabochon Contest schedule is shown below. **Good Luck!**

2026 SNGMS Cabochon Contest Themes

Month	Nevada Only or Certain Size/Shape	Winners
January	Nevada collected - Fluorite	1 st - Lloyd Chayette 2 nd - Ralph Voelker
February	Small size – length/width 5 mm or smaller	1 st - Evan Plumleigh 2 nd - Patty Johnson
March	Nevada collected - Wonderstone	1 st - Evan Plumleigh 2 nd - Lloyd Chayette
April	Nevada collected - Turquoise/variscite	1 st - Evan Plumleigh 2 nd - Lloyd Chayette
May	Medium size – length/width 30 mm maximum	1 st - Bruce Martin 2 nd - Barb Maz
June	Nevada collected - Jasper or Agate	1 st – Lloyd Chayette 2 nd – Ralph Voelker
July	Nevada collected - Petrified Wood	1 st – George Stewart 2 nd – Jonathan Tredwell
August	Asymmetrical, Free Form or Shaped (heart, cross, teardrop, star, crescent, etc.)	1 st – Joel Cooms - #6 2 nd – George Stewart #5
September	Nevada collected – Obsidian (any color)	
October	Large size – length/width more than 30 mm	
November	Nevada collected - Rhyolite	
December	No Contest	



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

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

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 & Education Center. **To reserve your spot, please email Richard Nelson (richard_nelson89@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 once a month as noted below and are highly encouraged for you to attend.

Speakers For 2026 General Meetings

Date	Speaker	Topic
09/14/26	Wendy Dresser, Tyra Tripp, Mike Ysles and Andrea Packo	Benefits of Volunteering
10/5/2026	John Anderson	Gold Searchers of Nevada

SNGMS Rock Stars Kids Club – 2026 Field Trips and Meetings*

Field Trip/Meeting	Date	Location
Kids Club Meeting, 3 pm - 5 pm	Sep 13, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center**
Kids Club Meeting, 3 pm - 5 pm	Oct 11, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center**
Kids Club Meeting, 3 pm - 5 pm	Nov 8, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center**
	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	

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

** SNGMS Lapidary & Education Ctr. 3111 South Valley View Blvd, Bldg. E Ste 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102

**Blast From the Past – excerpt from our vintage
November 1999 Newsletter entitled:
“There’s Nothing Wrong with Us!”**

Did you ever stop and think
And perhaps analyze
How ridiculous our hobby looks
Through other peoples' eyes?
A group of grown-up people
In a field on hands and knees,
with noses nearly to the ground
Raised rumps is all one sees.
Or this same group of people
Lugging sacks filled up with rocks.
It's no wonder that the uninformed
Think we have "Rock-Pox".
And when they see us fairly drool
over someone else's find,
Is it any wonder that they think
That we have lost our mind?
It is hard for them to comprehend
The joy we all derive
From fellowship and the great outdoors.
And to just be alive!
The unknowing ones may scoff and jeer,
They just don't understand
That each of us is rich, indeed,
With prizes from our land.
So if they think we're slightly daft,
Or perhaps one rock short,
They are the losers, because we know,
Our hobby is great sport!
From 1987 Deming Rock Chips VIA Harrison Yocum



Useless Facts



Squeezing a quartz crystal produces electricity through Piezoelectricity. A process where mechanical pressure shifts internal atomic charges. This creates positive and negative charges on opposite sides of the crystal generating an electrical voltage



Cleavage is the tendency of crystalline materials to split along flat, repeating internal planes of structural weakness. Think Mica, Halite, and Calcite.

**Vendor Opportunity
Boulder City Wurst Festival**

One day event - 5,000 - 7,500 people attend.
One booth per Vendor and one Vendor per booth.
Displays must remain until 7:00 PM.
\$75 per 10x10 booth space
Saturday, September 26, 2026
10:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Produced by the Boulder City Chamber of
Commerce and Boulder City Sunrise Rotary
100 Nevada Way, Boulder City, NV 89005
For more information call: (702) 293-2034, Email:
officeadmin@bouldercitychamber.com

SNGMS 2026 VOLUNTEER STAFF

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

SNGMS 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICE	DIRECTOR	EMAIL	PHONE
President	Tyra Tripp	president@sngms.net	702-493-2503
Vice-President	Ron Mazz	vicepresident@sngms.net	586-914-4130
Secretary	Mary Savage	secretary@sngms.net	
Treasurer	Dave Ford	treasurer@sngms.net	831-521-0214
Parliamentarian	Michael Kirk	parliamentarian@sngms.net	702-433-4146
Past President	Orville Wiemers	pastpresident@sngms.net	702-743-3277
Three-Year Board	Ralph Voelker	boardmember3@sngms.net	
Two-Year Board	Harvey Bergeron	boardmember2@sngms.net	
One-Year Board	Jean Chayette	boardmember1@sngms.net	

SNGMS 2026 COMMITTEE CHAIRS

COMMITTEE	CHAIR	EMAIL	PHONE
AV Wrangler	Timothy Ruzic		
Communication	Del Walkenshaw	sngmsnews@gmail.com	702-451-8040
Field Trip	Jonathan Tredwell	fieldtrip@sngms.net	725-377-0166
Fundraising	OPEN		
Google Manager	Thomas Boes	googlemanager@sngms.net	
Historian	Lisa Wiemers	historian@sngms.net	
Inventory	Ron Mazz	vicepresident@sngms.net	586-914-4130
Kids Club	Thomas Boes	thomas.boes@sngms.net	
Lapidary Manager	Mike Yslas	info@rockhoundingnation.com	562-242-4189
Media Committee	Kendra White	kendrarubywhite@gmail.com	
Meeting Greeter/Hospitality	Sandy Gonzales	teresastraditions@gmail.com	
Membership	Claudia Crouse	membership@sngms.net	
Newsletter	Ginger Ruggiero	newsletter@sngms.net	
New Member Liaison	Amber Palecek		702-343-7150
Program (Speakers)	Romy Umholtz	romyvision@gmail.com	
Publicity	Sandy Gonzalez	teresastraditions@gmail.com	
Raffle/Door Prizes	Barry and DiAnn Lawson	diannmariehayes@yahoo.com	702-577-7183
Refreshments	Richard and Elizabeth Nelson	richard_nelso89@hotmail.com	
Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies	Mary Beth Paladino		
Scholarship	Thomas Boes	thomas.boes@sngms.net	
Spring Jamboree Show	Orville Wiemers	sngmsjamboreeshowchair@gmail.com	702-743-3277
Sunshine	Beth Jones	punkyjones@hotmail.com	702-505-5819
Viva Las Vegas Rocks Show	Andrea Packo	showchairviva@sngms.net	702-279-7679
Webmaster	Lorilee Stackhouse	webmaster@sngms.net	702-817-5602

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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.



2026 Class Schedule

Class	Instructor	Date and time	Cost	Location	Contact
Silver Smithing	Bud Cranor, Aja Nicholson	Mon. Aug 10, 6:30 - 9:30 pm Mon. Aug 24, 6:30 - 9:30 pm	\$35	SNGMS Lapidary & Ed. Cntr ¹	MUST text 702-526-8003 for reservation
Faceting	Tom Kidwell	Saturdays, 9 am - 1 pm	\$15.00 for the class + \$5.00 for instructor fuel	SNGMS Lapidary & Ed. Cntr ¹	moorepeggy@me.com for reservations - must commit to 3 consecutive classes
Cabochon Making	Beth Jones	CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary & Ed. Cntr ¹	SORRY FOR THE INCONVENIENCE
Cabochon Making II	Joel	Wed. Aug 16, 6:00 – 7:00 pm Wed. Aug 30, 6:00 – 7:00 pm	\$6	SNGMS Lapidary & Ed. Cntr ¹	Text to attend 702-234-1521

3111 S. Valley View Blvd, Bldg. E, Suite 125, Las Vegas, NV 89102 - **SNGMS class fees include modest donation to the SNGMS.**

Beginning Silver Smithing Classes

Desert Art Supplies - Fridays 9:30 am - 12:15 pm
2750 N Green Valley Pkwy, Suite D
Henderson, NV 89014
702-451-8040

Learn the basics of silver smithing. 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



SNGMS members receive first class free with this ad & proof of membership!
Paid Advertisement



SNGMS Mascot: Rock Wren SNGMS Gemstone: Turquoise

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in Rocks, Gems, Geology, Fossils, Lapidary Arts or Silver Smithing

Annual Dues: Individual Membership \$35.00 – Family Membership \$45.00

Membership Meetings are open to all members and perspective members. Meetings start at 6:00 pm on the first

Monday of every month and are held at:

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

(702) 642-1213

Our annual awards dinner is held in December – no monthly membership meeting is held.

Crescent Peak Turquoise: Nevada's Sky-Blue Mountain Mine*

Crescent Peak turquoise comes from a site approximately forty miles east of Halloran Springs, Nevada, with related operations at the Stone Hammer area in San Bernardino County, California. The Toltec Gem Mining Company worked at both locations in the early twentieth century, marketing non-matrix sky-blue stones through fine trade catalogs. The operation's lead shareholder met a violent end at a California rail depot in 1903.

Field Notes by Mateo James: The Toltec Gem Mining Company's 1905 catalog described their stones as "perfectly matched flawless, pale blue turquoise beads". A promotional description that Chambless preserves as evidence of the period's marketing vocabulary. Non-matrix sky blue was the commercial ideal of the Turquoise Rush era, and Crescent Peak output fit that profile.

George Simmons was the principal shareholder. William Petry served as lapidary, working with the Denver Kley family. The production numbers from 1900 were estimated at \$20,000 to \$28,000, which was substantial for the period.

What distinguishes this mine's history is the Barnwell incident. Chambless (~lines 9533–9594) documents that on October 15, 1903, George Simmons was murdered at Barnwell, California. The railhead serving the mining operations by a former foreman named William L. Miller. Miller was subsequently found not guilty by reason of insanity. The violence cut off the principal management of the Crescent Peak-Halloran Springs operation at the peak of the turquoise rush.

What to look for: Non-matrix, sky-blue stone is the characteristic output documented in primary sources. The Toltec catalog's emphasis on matched, pale blue beads suggests the deposit favored clean, consistent material.

Recognition tells: Crescent Peak and Halloran Springs stones appeared in early-twentieth-century catalogs under the Toltec brand. Period pieces from pre-1905 are historically plausible.

Honest mine-status hedge: Post 1903 operational status, after Simmons's death, is not well documented in available primary sources. This appears to have been primarily a Rush-era operation.

Crescent Peak in Clark County, Nevada, is a publicly accessible rockhounding spot where turquoise has been reported, along with copper, gold, lead, molybdenum, silver, and vanadium. It sits near Crescent Peak Road and is generally open to casual collecting on BLM or other public land.

How to Find It for Free

Public land access: Most of Crescent Peak is on BLM or U.S. Forest Service land, where reasonable hand collecting of common minerals like turquoise is allowed. You don't need to pay to collect small specimens; just follow posted rules and avoid mining claims. Make sure you know where you are going so you are not trespassing.

Tips for Success

- Check claim status: even on public land, some areas may have active mining claims. No digging in restricted zones.
- Look in the right places: Turquoise often occurs in oxidized copper zones or along creek beds. Scan exposed rock faces and talus slopes.
- Practice Leave No Trace: Take all trash and avoid disturbing vegetation or wildlife habitat

*tskies, rockhounding.org, rockhoundr.com



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Full Page	\$150	\$275

If you're interested in advertising, please email newsletter@sngms.net

URGENT! SOCIAL MEDIA VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you have experience with engaging an audience on social media?

SNGMS is looking for a volunteer or two with experience to assist with our Instagram and Face Book accounts.

Please reach out to Mike Yslas, shop Foreman at 562-242-4189



SHOP SUPERVISORS NEEDED!

Looking for better Shop hours? Looking for free work time at the Shop?

Volunteer shop supervisors are needed!

No supervisor = The shop is closed

It's an excellent opportunity to pick up free shop hours for your use and for you to meet fellow SNGMS members!

Contact Mike Yslas at info@rockhoundingnation.com or 562-242-4189

Flexible schedules! Floaters are needed to cover on occasion.
Training is provided!

SNGMS Contact Information

Web Site: www.sngms.net
newsletter@sngms.net
sngmsnews@gmail.com
membership@sngms.net

SNGMS MISSION STATEMENT

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.

BLM Rockhounding Tips*

As the driest state in the nation, we've got a lot of rocks that are all on clear display with little vegetation covering them and a lot of places to look for them. Access to BLM land is an opportunity to find unique and highly desired specimens for free. Knowing a few tips will assist you with staying within BLM rules and regulations as noted below.

- Common rock specimens can be collected with hand tools only and for private use.
- A permit or contract is needed for commercial mining of common minerals such as sand, gravel, topsoil, landscaping rocks, and similar materials.
- In Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas, the only collecting allowed is hobby collecting. This activity must not involve surface disturbance.
- Prohibited items include prehistoric tools and chips or flaking debris made of precious or semi-precious stones.
- The daily maximum is 25 pounds plus one piece of petrified wood collected per day.
- The yearly maximum is 250 pounds collected, per person per year.
- Permits or contracts are required for pieces over 250 pounds.
- You may not trade, barter, or sell the petrified wood you collect without a contract from the BLM.

*Nevada Recreation Activities | Bureau of Land Management Website



RMFMS (Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies) News

Jodi Brewster will be stepping down as the RMFMS AZ/NV State Director at the end of her current term which will be in November 2026. This is a two-year term.

"I feel that it is time to give someone else the opportunity to serve in this position. I have greatly enjoyed serving as your State Director and am very grateful for the friendships, experiences, and memories I have made along the way. Although I will be stepping down as the RMFMS AZ/NV State Director, I hope to continue seeing many of you and staying involved with RMFMS. Thank you all for your support and for allowing me the opportunity to serve as your AZ/NV State Director. It has truly been a pleasure, and I look forward to seeing you all at future RMFMS events." Jodi noted in a recent email.

If you are interested in becoming a candidate for the RMFMS AZ/NV State Director position, please contact Jim Grey at jimgray@wyoming.com.



SOUTHERN NEVADA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY

ROCKS, GEMS & JEWELRY SHOW



November
6th, 7th, & 8th
2026

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