



THE POLISHED SLAB

SOUTHERN NEVADA GEM AND MINERAL SOCIETY



January 2026

A NEWSLETTER FOR ROCKHOUNDS SINCE 1940

VOLUME 86 ISSUE 1

UPCOMING MEETINGS

SNGMS Board Meeting Jan 29, 2026
SNGMS General Mtg. Feb 2, 2026

SNGMS Contacts:

www.sngms.net
sngmsnews@gmail.com
sngmspresident@gmail.com
sngmsvicepresident@gmail.com
sngmssecretary@gmail.com
sngmstreasurer@gmail.com
sngmsshowchair@gmail.com
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sngmsjamboreeshowchair@gmail.com

Time to Renew Your Membership

There are ways to renew your SNGMS membership:

- 1) Online at
<https://www.sngms.net/sngmsmembership>
(be sure to scroll to the bottom of the page)
- 2) At the SNGMS Lapidary Shop
- 3) At the SNGMS General Meeting
- 4) At Desert Art Supplies, Henderson, Nevada

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Hi This Is Orville-

As you are all aware I am handing the baton to Tyra Tripp as SNGMS President effective this month. I want to thank you for your support. Tyra is a teacher in Nevada and is anxious to get started as your President. Please throw your support to her as you did me and even more so as we move forward in an ever challenging world. Volunteerism is important in a club like this and without it things don't happen. Even what you may think to be small contributions add up to something big. Our hobby is important to us and the only way it can sustain and grow is if we are all involved in its future. Now let's go find some cool rocks.

Rock on!!

Orville Wiemers Jr

Hello Everyone -

I'm honored to serve as your president. I'm looking forward to my term and hearing from everyone. I want to reiterate Orville's comment about how every contribution of time helps. With so many members in our club, if everyone donates even one hour per month we could accomplish so much.

Tyra Tripp
SNGMS President



2026 Field Trips¹ & Events

Field Trip ¹ /Event	Date	Location
Hummingbird Mine for chrysocolla	Jan. 24	Tonopah, AZ (NOT NV)

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

Las Vegas Desert Dogs Lacrosse Team Partnership!

Every SNGMS member can purchase discounted tickets and, best of all, a portion of every ticket sold goes directly to support the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society!

Who's Playing: Las Vegas Desert Dogs vs. Colorado Mammoth

Price: Tickets are \$29.12. Deadline for purchase is Feb 13, 2026 at 7:30 PM

Location: The game is at Lee's Family Forum, 200 S Green Valley Pkwy, Henderson, NV 89012

Date: Feb 13, 2026. Game Starts: 7:30 PM.

Tailgate Party: Kicks off at 4:30 PM.

Doors Open: 6:30 PM.

This is more than just lacrosse it's a night of fun, community, and entertainment:

- Fast-paced Las Vegas Desert Dogs Lacrosse action
- A high-energy KISS tribute band to Rock the Box!
- Discounted tickets available for members, family, and friends

The more tickets we sell, the more support and awareness we raise for SNGMS! Let's pack the arena, cheer on the Desert Dogs, and show the community the strength of our rockhounding family.

Here is the link to purchase tickets:

<https://www.gofevo.com/event/Southernnevada2.13>

Get your tickets today and join us for an unforgettable night!

Any questions please contact Amber Palecek

(702-343-7150)

or Jonathan Tredwell (sngmsfieldtrip@gmail.com, 725-377-0166) for more information.



SNGMS Members Receive **20% Discount**



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702-344-8579

WHOLESALE / RETAIL



Deb Bucknam's Fabulous
Dino Find

DiAnn Lawson With Her
Auction Item

SNGMS Awards Banquet Photos from December 2025
courtesy of Deb Bucknam

February 2026 General Meeting Speaker

Rayette Martin, Executive Director of
Nevadans for Cultural Preservation, will speak on
Citizen Stewardship: Preserving Archaeological Sites

SNGMS Board Meeting Minutes for 1/8/2026

The regular Board of Directors meeting of the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society was called to order at 4:00 pm at the SNGMS Lapidary and Education Center by the President. All board members were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The minutes of the October 30, 2025 board meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: David Ford, Treasurer, reported preliminary financial data for 2025. The LEC ran a deficit of \$19,000 in 2025. SNGMS had an overall profit of \$12,000 in 2025. A financial review will be scheduled in February 2026 and membership comments will be solicited.

Unfinished Business:

Update the SNGMS 5 Year Plan – Ralph Voelker will recruit a steering committee for fundraising and a strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats analysis.

Adding a Volunteer Column to Slab – there was consensus this would be helpful.

SNGMS Etsy Store – David Rosinsky will be invited to the February 2026 SNGMS to discuss a potential SNGMS Etsy store.

Password Management – encryption and cloud storage of SNGMS passwords was discussed.

Lapidary and Education Center (LEC) Report – Chops Wenzl reported the large flat lap needs a new disc. It is possible there is an existing replacement disc at the LEC, the inventory will be checked. A new LEC supervisor is needed for 2026. LEC lockers will be rented on an annual basis of \$36/year. Fees for lockers currently in use must be received by February 1, 2026, otherwise the locks and contents of unpaid lockers will be removed.

Program (Speaker) Volunteer – a new program volunteer needs to be found.

Field Trips – Jonathan Tredwell, field trip coordinator, suggested reducing the number of field trips to 4/year (quarterly). Orville Wiemers will work with Jonathon, Michael Yslas, and Richard Nelson to offer orientation and training for field trip participants.

2026 Awards Banquet – Chops Wenzl will manage the 2026 Awards Banquet.

Gem and Mineral Show Updates – the 2025 Viva Las Vegas Rocks! Show had a profit of \$8445. Ralph Voelker moved that a budget of \$30,000 be approved for the 2026 Viva show, seconded by Mary Savage. The motion carried. Mary Savage moved that a \$9,000 budget be approved for the 2026 Boulder City Spring Jamboree show, seconded by Ralph Voelker. The motion carried. SNGMS has been offered a free information booth at the Henderson Art Festival, May 9 – 10, 2026. Orville Wiemers, Chops Wenzl, and Dave Ford volunteered to help staff the booth.

New Business:

Life Time Membership - Bill Kogan is eligible for SNGMS lifetime membership and will be nominated at the General Meeting.

LEC - Tyra Tripp will investigate the cost of installing WIFI at the LEC. A new saw blade is needed, Mary Savage moved that a new blade be purchased, seconded by Dave Ford. The motion carried. LEC security measures were discussed.

SNGMS Bylaws Update – the Bylaws Committee presented proposed bylaws changes. The SNGMS will review the changes and a membership review and vote will be scheduled.

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 pm.



SNGMS General Meeting Minutes for 1/12/2026

The General meeting of the SNGMS was called to order on January 12, 2026 at 6 pm by Orville Wiemers. He acknowledged new members and people with show and tell items. Volunteer appreciation gifts were distributed for those not present at the 2025 SNGMS Awards Banquet. The door prize drawing included items donated by the Desert Dogs Lacrosse team. Minutes from the November 3, 2025 General Meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report: Dave Ford reported the checking account is down \$2000, the investment account is unchanged. Preliminary analysis shows SNGMS made \$12,000 in 2005. In February, a financial review meeting will be scheduled and member comments will be requested.

Kids Club: Wendy Dresser thanked people who supported the Kids Club meeting on January 11, 2025 which 19 kids attended. She congratulated RMFMS honor roll members, and explained that eight kids from Nevada are on the roll, and they are all SNGMS members. There will be a field trip to the Ore Car Mine on February 7, 2006. RSVP to Wendy at 702-556-2748 by February 2, 2026. In April 2026, there will be a field trip to Pahrump, Nevada for fossils. Volunteers are needed to staff the Kids Club booth at the Spring Jamboree in May 2026.

Field Trips: Johnathan Tredwell reported the trip to the Hummingbird mine in Tonopah, Arizona (NOT Nevada) is still on and that an excavator will be on site. A trip to the Cady Mountains near Barstow, California is under consideration for March 2026. This would be a 2-day overnight trip to collect jasper. A trip for turquoise in Tonopah, Nevada to an Otteson mine is being planned from April 2026.

Lapidary and Education Center Report: Orville Wiemers reported two saws are down and replacement blades are on order. Someone didn't empty the reservoir for the water saw. This rusts the saw blade. Please be sure to empty the water. Shop supervisors are needed, training will be provided.

SNGMS Elections: Peggy Sue Moore nominated Tyra Tripp for president. Tyra was elected by acclamation. Peggy Sue Moore swore in Tyra Tripp and Mary Savage as SNGMS board members.

Speaker: The Desert Dogs Lacrosse team gave a presentation about a fundraiser for SNGMS.

Sunshine Report: Beth Jones reported Mary Beth Paladino fell and is recovering.

Cabochon Contest: Lloyd Chayette took first place, and Ralph Voelker took second place.

Membership: Orville Wiemers reported as of December 2026, SNGMS had 852 members.

Shows: For the Viva Las Vegas Rocks 2025 show Andrea Packo reported there were 83 SNGMS volunteers, and 875 paid attendees, 24 new SNGMS members were recruited, and there was a profit of \$8445. Eventbrite is a good way to sell advance tickets. There were two show sponsors, our first try at this type of support. Andrea requested a budget of \$30,000 for the 2026 Viva show. Romy Umholtz made a motion to allocate \$30,000 for the 2026 Viva show, Wendy Dresser seconded, the motion carried. For the 2026 Spring Jamboree, Orville Wiemers requested a \$9,000 budget. Joel Coombs moved to approve \$9,000 for the 2026 Spring Jamboree budget, Lloyd Chayette seconded. The motion carried. All 2026 Jamboree indoor booths are sold, some outdoor ones are still available. SNGMS has been offered a free informational booth at the Henderson Art Festival on May 9 and 10, 2026. Volunteers are needed to work 2 – 4 hour shifts. Contact Dave Ford or Orville Wiemers to volunteer.

2026 Awards Banquet: Chops Wenzl proposed Sunset Station Casino for the venue, the cost will not be available until March 2026. A suggestion to find a slightly larger venue to avoid turning participants away was suggested, including Sunset Castle.

Lapidary and Education Center Lockers: Lockers are available for SNGMS to rent on an annual basis (January – December). Fees are due by February 1, 2026. Fees for lockers currently in use must also be paid by February 1, 2026.

Life Time Memberships: (William) Bill Kogan and Ann Harris were elected to Life Time Memberships.

Classes: Peggy Sue Moore plans to survey the SNGMS membership regarding what kind of classes are of interest.

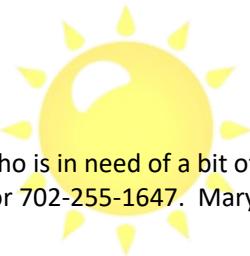
The meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.



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 contact Beth Jones at punkyjones@hotmail.com or 702-255-1647. Mary Beth Paladino is recovering from a fall.



Member Spotlight

Jerry Hughes

Jerry grew up in the Bighorn Basin of Wyoming, in a coal town named Gebo. The town was abandoned after the mine played out in 1938. Jerry's father was a WWI veteran who worked in the coal mine.

Jerry attended the University of Utah to study pharmacy. He moved to Las Vegas, Nevada and purchased the pharmacy built next to Women's Hospital. The pharmacy was named "My Own Pharmacy" (MYOP), and Jerry ran it for 20 years.

Jerry's son began rock hounding when he was about 8 years old, so Jerry took his son to gem and mineral shows. Jerry joined the Las Vegas Gem Club (LVGC) and the Clark County Gem Club in the 1980s. There were a lot of hard feelings between the LVGC and the CCGC, so Jerry dropped out of the LVGC. He joined the SNGMS after it formed.

For SNGMS, he volunteered to be a Lapidary Supervisor. Beth Jones trained him.

Jerry built himself a 10 inch trim saw. He was always buying slabs and rough, but never had time to cut them. By 2009, Jerry had a trim saw, an oscillating lap, and a used slab saw from the Quartzsite show, and he finally began cutting his hoard. In the past, he sold cabochons at gem and mineral shows, but now finds the set up is too much trouble.



Jerry Hughes
December 2025

Jerry has a passion for agates and enjoys trips to Quartzsite. As he wanders from one end of the show to the other, he admires rocks as he goes (and maybe makes a few purchases).

Lapidary/Jewelry Studio Tips & Tricks

Cabochon Setting Techniques

Choosing the Right Setting

The setting—the unsung hero of jewelry design! It ensures your cabochons stay put. Bezel settings are the bodyguards of the jewelry world, offering top-notch protection, but don't count out prongs and other methods—they've got their own charm and can hold their own in the security department. Some common methods of setting cabochons are discussed below.

Bezel Setting

Bezel settings are the most common way to set cabochons. A bezel is a strip of metal bent into the shape and size of the stone, but slightly taller and then soldered to the piece of jewelry. The cabochon is inserted into the bezel and the metal is bent over the stone, holding it in place.



Bezel Setting

Prong Setting

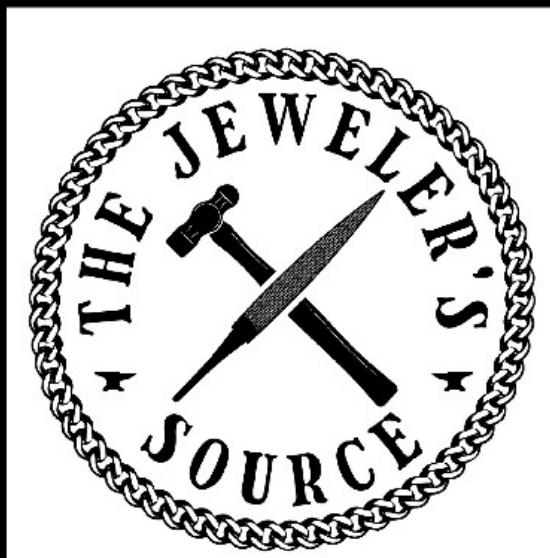
Prong settings use metal claws to hold cabochons in place. More stone is visible compared to a bezel setting. The prongs are cut with a notch and bent at the edge to fit over the top of the stone, holding it in place.



Flush Settings In flush settings, the cabochon is set into a drilled hole in the metal, with the top of the stone sitting flush with the surface.

Flush Setting





Members Receive 5% Off

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

7022 West Charleston Blvd.
Las Vegas, NV 89117

702-745-1127

thejewelerssource@gmail.com

IG - [thejewelerssource](https://www.instagram.com/thejewelerssource)



SNGMS Meeting Schedules and SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center Hours

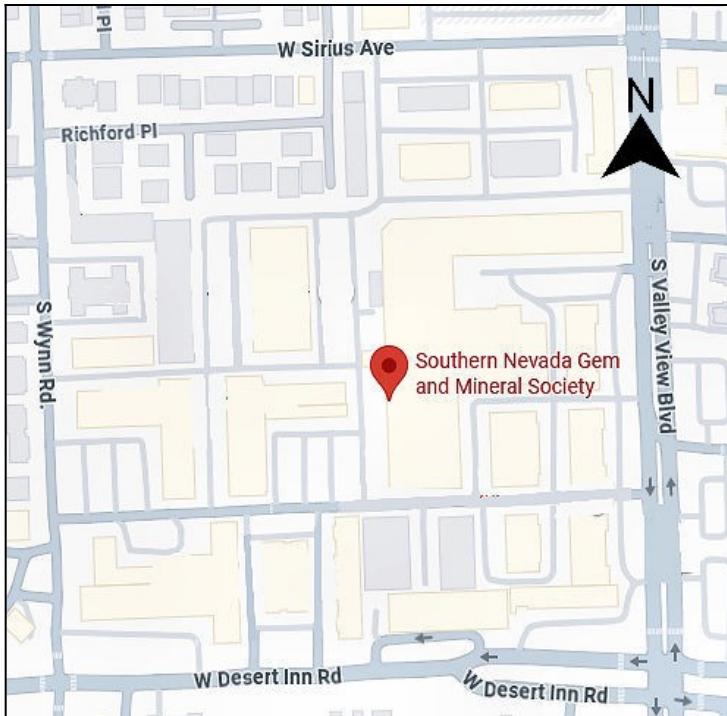
SNGMS 2025 – 2026 Meeting Schedule		
Board Meeting ¹	General Meeting ²	Kids Club Meeting ³
		Jan 11, 2026
Jan 29, 2026	Feb 2, 2026	Feb 8, 2026
Feb 26, 2026	Mar 2, 2026	Mar 8, 2026
Apr 2, 2026	Apr 6, 2026	Apr 12, 2026
Apr 30, 2026	May 4, 2026	May 10, 2026 – NO MEETING
May 28, 2026	Jun 1, 2026	Jun 14, 2026
Jul 2, 2026	Jul 6, 2026	Jul 12, 2026
Jul 30, 2026	Aug 3, 2026	Aug 9, 2026
Sep 10, 2026	Sep 14, 2026	Sep 13, 2026
Oct 1, 2026	Oct 5, 2026	Oct 11, 2026
Oct 29, 2026	Nov 2, 2026	Nov 8, 2026
Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet

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.

1) Meets at SNGMS Lapidary and Education Center except field trips and special events

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 and Education Center with exception of some field trips, membership required. Details on page 3.



SNGMS LAPIDARY AND EDUCATION CENTER HOURS*

Sunday 10 am – 3 pm <= CLOSED, no supervisor available

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

EQUIPMENT FEES:

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

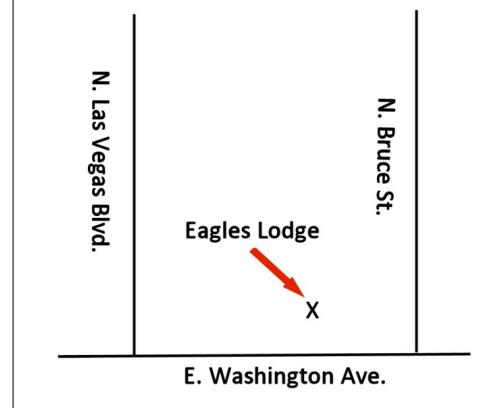
CENTER CLOSED:

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

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

Eagles Lodge Locator Map

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



Valley of Fire, Nevada Petrified Wood Quizlet

Q: What kind of trees are in the petrified wood at Valley of Fire?

A: Conifers

Q: How old is the petrified wood at Valley of Fire?

A: about 225 million years old





EDUCATIONAL STUDIO & ROCK SHOP
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SNGMS MEMBERS GET 10% OFF
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MINING LOCATION MAPS

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2025 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
January	Nevada collected - Fluorite
February	Small size – length/width 5 mm or smaller
March	Nevada collected - Wonderstone
April	Nevada collected - Turquoise/Variscite
May	Medium size – length/width 30 mm maximum
June	Nevada collected - Jasper or Agate
July	Nevada collected - Petrified Wood
August	Asymmetrical, Free Form or Shaped (heart, cross, teardrop, star, crescent etc)
September	Nevada collected – Obsidian (any color)
October	Large size – length/width more than 30 mm
November	Nevada collected - Rhyolite
December	No Contest



January 2026 SNGMS
Cabochon Contest Winners, left to right:
Lloyd Chayette, 1st place, entry 4
Ralph Voelker, 2nd place, entry 7



January 2026
Cabochon Contest
Entries

LEC Lockers

Lockers are available for SNGMS members to rent on an annual basis (January – December) at the LEC. Fees are due by February 1, 2026. Fees for lockers currently in use must also be paid by February 1, 2026. If you do not want to renew your lease, please remove your lock and items from the locker by February 1, 2026. Otherwise, the lock will be cut and the locker contents disposed of.

Payment by cash or check can be made at the LEC, or a check can be mailed to:

SNGMS Treasurer
3111 South Valley View Blvd,
Building E Suite 125
Las Vegas, NV 89102

Did You Know?

You can lend a hand with the LEC laundry! Volunteers grab towels from the drying rack, wash, dry, and fold them before returning them for everyone to use. Consider taking home a few dirty items, cleaning them up, and bringing them back!



BIRTHDAYS

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



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL THE SNGMS MEMBERS CELEBRATING IN JANUARY!
EAT CAKE AND LET THE CONFETTI FLY, BECAUSE YOU'RE ONE YEAR COOLER NOW!



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

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

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Welcome new members to the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society! Your passion for gemstones and minerals is a perfect fit for our community of enthusiasts. To acquaint you with our workshop and equipment, we offer orientation and training sessions at the SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center. **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, January 11, 2026	10 am - noon	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Ctr 3111 South Valley View Blvd, Building E Suite 125 Las Vegas, NV 89102
Monday, January 19, 2026	6:30 – 8:30 pm		



**SNGMS Rock Stars Kids Club
2026 Field Trips and Meetings¹**

Field Trip/Meeting	Date	Location
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Jan 11, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Feb 8, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Mar 8, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Apr 12, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	May 10 – NO MEETING, MOTHER'S DAY	
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Jun 14, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Jul 12, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Aug 9, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Sep 13, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Oct 11, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
Kids Club Meeting, 3- 5 pm	Nov 8, 2026	SNGMS Lapidary & Education Center ²
	Dec no meeting, Awards Banquet	

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

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

3) Text Wendy Dresser, 702-556-2748 to reserve a space

**Fossil Focus
La Brea Tar Pits, Los Angeles, CA**

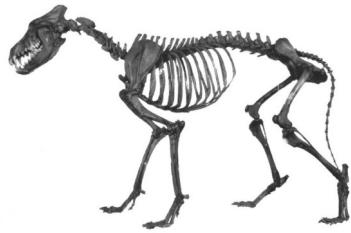
Excerpted from:

www.laalmanac.com/history/hi736.php, <https://thetouristchecklist.com/la-brea-tar-pits/>
<https://tar pits.org>

The La Brea Tar Pits are in the heart of Los Angeles, California and are one of the most famous fossil sites in the world. The La Brea Tar Pits don't actually contain tar. They are filled with asphalt. Tar forms from organic materials like wood, peat, or coal. Asphalt forms from crude oil seeping to the ground surface.

The pools of asphalt that seeped to the surface were only a few inches deep. However, even as little as an inch and a half of asphalt can trap a large animal. Scientists believe that animals (especially larger ones) only occasionally found themselves stuck in the goo to the point where they were unable to free themselves. Over a period of 40,000 years, even occasionally unfortunate animals trapped by asphalt left an enormous number of fossilized bones.

Asphalt is an amazing preservative. An incredible variety and number of extinct Ice Age animals have been recovered from the La Brea Tar Pits. More than one million bones have been found from more than 231 species of vertebrate animals. Plants and invertebrate animals have also been recovered.



La Brea Tar Pit Dire Wolf Fossil

La Brea Tar Pit fossils date from the very end of the Pleistocene epoch (the Ice Ages), from 11,700 to 50,000 years ago. The ratio of carnivores to herbivores is nine to one. Scientists believe that trapped herbivores attracted lots of carnivores. The carnivores, finding an animal trapped by asphalt and expecting an easy meal, also became trapped.



La Brea Tar Pit Excavation
Photo by N. Nehring

Visitors can see fossil excavations in progress at the site. You can see scientists at they recover fossils from the pits. Consider purchasing tickets online in advance (<https://tar pits.org/>). There are often special rates for children and families. The George C. Page Museum, located on-site, is included in the admission price, and visiting both the tar pits and the museum is highly recommended.



SNGMS 2026 VOLUNTEER STAFF

Contact any Director to volunteer for a position, or a Committee Chair to offer to help on their committee.
SNGMS 2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICE	DIRECTOR	EMAIL	PHONE
President	Tyra Tripp	sngmspresident@gmail.com	
Vice-President	Ron Mazz	zman8229@gmail.com	586-914-4130
Secretary	Mary Savage	lasvegassilversmithing@protonmail.com	
Treasurer	Dave Ford	sngmstreasurer@gmail.com	831-521-0214
Parliamentarian	Michael Kirk	vpoker81@cox.net	702-433-4146
Past President	Orville Wiemers		702-743-3277
Three Year Board	Ralph Voelker	nicepipes@yahoo.com	
Two Year Board	Harvey Bergeron	harveyrita@gmail.com	
One Year Board	Jean Chayette	jalmiz201@gmail.com	714-474-6384

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	sngmsfieldtrip@gmail.com	725-377-0166
Google Manager	Thomas Boes	thomasboes86@gmail.com	
Historian	Lisa Wiemers	lowiem@embarqmail.com	
Hospitality	Wayne Muth		702-255-1647
Inventory	Ron Mazz	zman8229@gmail.com	586-914-4130
Kids Club	Wendy Dresser	wndresser@gmail.com	702-556-2748
Lapidary Manager	OPEN		
Media Committee	Kendra White	kendrarubywhite@gmail.com	
Membership	Claudia Crouse	ccrouse295@gmail.com	
Newsletter	Mary Savage	lasvegassilversmithing@protonmail.com	
New Member Liaison	Amber Palecek		702-343-7150
Program (Speakers)	OPEN		
Raffle	DiAnn Lawson	diannmariehayes@yahoo.com	702-577-7183
Refreshments	Richard and Elizabeth Nelson	richard_nelso89@hotmail.com	
Rocky Mountain Federation of Mineralogical Societies	Pending		
Scholarship	Debbie Bucknam	grandmadeb10@gmail.com	
Spring Jamboree Show	Orville Wiemers	sngmsjamboreeshowchair@gmail.com	702-743-3277
Sunshine	Beth Jones	punkyjones@hotmail.com	702-255-1647
Viva Las Vegas Rocks Show	Andrea Packo	aspacko@gmail.com	702-279-7679
Webmaster	Lorrilee Stackhouse	lorrilee@proton.me	702-817-5602



**SNGMS 2026 Board of Directors Being Sworn In
at the Awards Banquet**

Left to right: Harvey Bergeron (2 year board member), Dave Ford (treasurer), Orville Wiemers (past president), Ralph Voelker (3 year board member), Michael Kirk (parliamentarian), Ron Mazz (vice president), Jean Chayette (1 year board member). Mary Beth Paladino in front (master of ceremony).
Photo courtesy of Deb Bucknam



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2025 SNGMS Awards Banquet Photos

Courtesy of Sonya Edwards



Mineral Musings

Carved in Stone: The Story of Redrock Canyon's Sandstone Quarry

www.onlinenevada.org/sites/default/files/SandstoneQuarry_Rafferty_1985.pdf

Sandstone Quarry is one of the most popular sites at the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area (RRCNCA). This is a historic site with several multi-ton blocks of sandstone. The blocks were abandoned when the third try at quarrying sandstone ended in bankruptcy in 1912 and the quarry closed.

In 1905, the Excelsior Stone Quarry began operations and became one of the first industries in the Las Vegas, Nevada area. It was opened in 1905 by the Lyon-Wilson Construction Company of San Francisco. The quarry was expected to produce sandstone blocks for buildings in Los Angeles and San Francisco. The stone was cut into blocks of up to ten tons by a channeling machine, and then transported overland in large wagons to the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad siding in Las Vegas for shipment. A seventeen-ton steam traction machine, resembling a train locomotive, was used to pull the wagons, each loaded with two 10-ton blocks, to Las Vegas.

Railroad siding in Las Vegas for shipment. A seventeen-ton steam traction machine, resembling a train locomotive, was used to pull the wagons, each loaded with two 10-ton blocks, to Las Vegas.

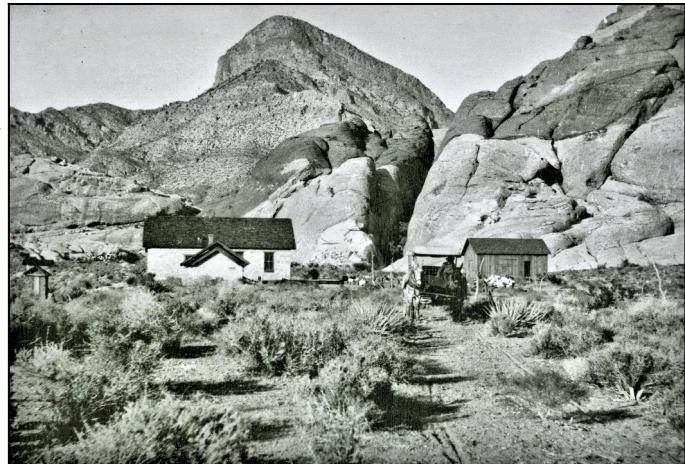
The tractor was named "Big Devil Wagon" and it used about 400 gallons of crude oil per day as fuel. The sandstone was then shipped by rail from Las Vegas to markets in San Francisco and Los Angeles for use as decorative building facades. The sandstone was high quality, but production was expensive and unprofitable. With the discovery of similar sandstone deposits closer to the railroad, the Excelsior Stone Quarry shut down in 1906. Later that same year, other operators reopened the quarry. Lincoln Sandstone Company, but it fell on hard times, and was reorganized as the Nevada Sandstone Company in 1910. Nevada Sandstone Company used a gasoline-powered traction engine called a caterpillar, which was more powerful and efficient than the old steam traction engine. Even with better equipment, the operation was still uneconomical. In 1912, cutting at the quarry ended again.

Sandstone Quarry is located about 2.7 miles out the RRCNCA Scenic Loop Road. Drive to the Sandstone Quarry Trailhead, then walk about 500 feet north to the quarry. The information signs and huge sandstone blocks can't be missed.



Sandstone Blocks at the Sandstone Quarry Trailhead

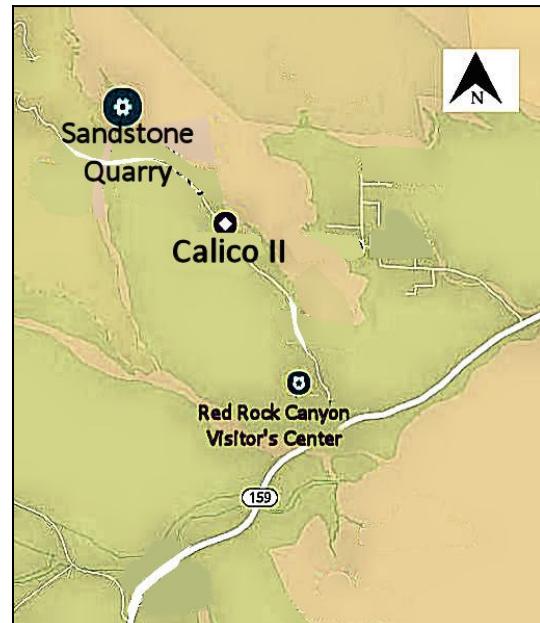
Photo by Jim Boone



Sandstone Quarry at Red Rock Canyon, NV 1908

Note the horse-drawn wagon near the center of the photo

Photo courtesy of UNLV Library Specials Collections



Location of Excelsior Stone Quarry
Within Red Rock Canyon



January 2026 Class Schedule

(see page 10 for New Member Orientation Schedule)

Class	Instructor	Date and Time	Cost	Location	Contact
Silver Smithing	Bud Cranor, Aja Nicholson	Mon. Jan. 12, 6:30-9:30 pm Mon. Jan. 26, 6:30-9:30 pm	\$35	SNGMS Lapidary & Ed. Cntr ¹	bacrano@yahoo.com
Faceting	Tom Kidwell	Saturdays 9 am - 1 pm	\$15.00 for the class plus \$5.00 for instructor fuel fund	SNGMS Lapidary & Ed. Cntr ¹	moorepeggysue@gmail.com for reservations - must commit to 3 consecutive classes
Cabochon Making	Beth Jones	Saturdays 1 pm - class limited to 3 people	\$10	SNGMS Lapidary & Ed. Cntr ¹	punkjones@hotmail.com for reservations
Hydraulic Press	Mary Savage	Sunday, Jan. 18, 1 - 4 pm	\$20. Bring your own jeweler's saw	SNGMS Lapidary & Ed. Cntr ¹	lasvegassilversmithing@protonmail.com

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

All SNGMS class fees include a modest donation to the SNGMS.

Beginning Silver Smithing Classes

Fridays 9:30 am - 12:15pm

Desert Art Supplies
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



Silver Smithing Student's Ring
 Photo courtesy of Bella Romero

**SNGMS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES****You Can Help!****Contact Ron Mazz zman8229@gmail.com or 586-914-4130****Meeting Greeter (need more than one)**

Greet people as they arrive at the monthly General Meeting, help them sign in, pass out door prize tickets, and cabochon contest voting slips. 5 pm - 6 pm once a month at the General Meeting.

Speaker Coordinator

Line up speakers for the monthly General Meetings, February - October (no speakers in January, November, or December). Send speakers information on SNGMS audio visual support (a standard email), greet the speaker at the meeting, and help them coordinate with the AV Wrangler.

LEC Manager

Create LEC staffing schedules, coordinate with engineering team on equipment maintenance, order supplies within budget as needed, take delivery of supplies, provide purchase documentation to Treasurer. Monitor equipment usage.

LEC Supervisor (need more than one)

Supervise SNGMS member sign-in, sign-out, collect fees, provide assistance using LEC equipment. Maintain equipment logs as needed. Write trouble tickets for the engineering staff for equipment maintenance as needed. Shifts are a minimum of 4 hours, can work 1 or more shifts per month. Daytime, evening, and weekend shifts available. Rarely, there is a supervisors' staff meeting.

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.sngms.net

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

Annual Dues: Individual - \$35; Family - \$45

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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