

# SOUTHERN NEVADA GEM and MINERAL SOCIETY

Las Vegas, Nevada



## The Polished Slab

Volume 63, Issue 7

### Message From The President *Craig A. Edmonds*

Dear Friends and Members,

It has been great to see all the new members and guests join us over the last few months. It is very encouraging to see all the new interest in our club. We have been on Clark County Outdoors on Channel 4. Our website SNGMS.org has brought added attention to our club. We also just finished with the International Gem and Jewelry Show and that has brought many new members to us. Now our challenge is to find out what has brought all these new members to our club and help them with their interests. We need you to talk to us and let us know your interests.

We have gone through the process the last 6 months of combining the two clubs and a lot of it has not always been exciting or rock and mineral orientated. We have now made it through that process and it's time to get back to having fun again. The date of October 25 has been selected for our fall picnic. It will be at our claim at the Ore Car Mine near Lake Mead. It will be a potluck and we will be able to do rock collecting while we are there. We will be looking for volunteers to help plan the picnic if you are interested.

I am looking for an instructor to teach a class on beginning rock collecting. With all of our new members and many others who are not that familiar with what material is out there to collect it's time to have a class. If you would like to teach a class please let me know. We are starting a new feature at our July meeting. The topic is my favorite rock or mineral and why. Mona Howells has volunteered to be our first and will talk about her favorite rock and tell us about it.

I would like to thank EVERYONE who helped make our show in June a SUCCESS. If you did not get a chance to help don't feel left out because we will have another show in October that you can help us with.

July 2003

### Mineral Identification—How Hard Can It Be?

*J.L. Foutz*

One of the easiest and useful ways to tell rocks apart is to compare their hardness, or how easily they can be scratched; or, if you want to sound like a scientist: its resistance to abrasion.

An Austrian mineralogist, Frederick Mohs, first published, in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, an idea of finding the hardness of an unknown mineral by testing it against a mineral of known hardness. He found a handy list of ten minerals his marketing department cleverly named "Mohs' Scale.

(Continued on page8)

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# Director's Meeting Notes for June 2003

*Priscilla Messenger, Secretary*

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM by Craig Edmonds, our President.

Concerning our displays at the Las Vegas Zoo and at various libraries, Glenn Beye proposed that someone, perhaps Camilla Restrepo who now is our publicity chair, should take charge of this program. Pat Dingle is the person at the zoo who we must work with.

Craig has been contacted by the Harry Potter Children' Library sponsors. Craig will talk with Camilla about this project and ask Roy Beeson and Ed Rupprecht if they would loan rock specimens for these displays which would rotate quarterly.

The Treasurer's Report of David Finch was approved. The May show earned slightly more than had been projected in our 2003 budget. We also received a refund of Arizona sales tax paid originally on our new workshop equipment.

Glenn Beye reported on repairs necessary after the May Gem Show. Two display cases have small cracks in corner of glass and the glass on another case must be replaced. A water pump on the geode saw must be replaced. He will provide cost estimates at the next meeting for board approval.

Several people have suggested we rent a truck or U-Haul vehicle for transporting display cases in the future.

A date of October 25, 2003 was set for the Potluck Picnic at the Ore Car Mine site near Lake Mead. If we cannot get a special exemption, members will have to pay the entrance fee to the Lake Mead Recreation area unless they have a Golden Eagle Pass or other national park passes. The Board will work on providing primitive restroom facilities. Tom Skeary can be contacted for information on reserving other sites like Cold Creek. Additional sites like Cathedral Rock at Mt. Charleston and the Nelson Mine were discussed. Floyd Lamb and Spring Mt. state parks also require a fee for each vehicle.

Tammy Leary has met with the Rupprechts for a

three-year extension of our Workshop contract with them. Formal approval of the contract will be made at the July Board Meeting. The club's liability insurance is provided by CFMS and Jaen , our CFMS representative, should get a Proof of Insurance from them. The Rupprecht's Homeowners Insurance covers the workshop but not the equipment inside, to the best of the Board's knowledge.

President Edmonds announced a new meeting feature where a member will speak and show his favorite rock and the story behind it. Mona Howells will be the July speaker. We discussed having a class on the basics of rock identification. Glenn Beye will bring his software on this subject to the next Board meeting. Vice-President Frank Auerswald will talk with Roy Beeson, Ray Simpson. Doris Currington and Smitty Reeves about any help they could provide.

We hope to have an answer to our queries about using the new facility near Stewart and Rt. 215 by the next Board meeting. This would provide better parking for our meetings and for our Christmas Banquet but the cost may be prohibitive. We may set up a special area at the Heritage Gem Show on the day the schools bring children to that event similar to what we have done in the past at various schools and libraries.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.



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# Minutes of the General Meeting of the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society for June 2003

*Priscilla Messenger, Secretary*

At 7:00 PM President Edmonds called the June meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Our members, including at least 18 who joined because of interest sparked by our displays and activities at the International Gem & Mineral Show at Cashman Center last weekend, exchanged greetings with those around them.

Program chair, Mary Beth Paladino, introduced Elsie Sellars of the Nevada Conservation and Natural Resources Department. She gave a very educational 20-minute slide show on the wildlife of southern Nevada and their habitats and habits. Mary Beth announced that next month's program will be on onyx and some samples will be randomly given out.

The Kid's Club will meet on Saturday, June 28 at 8:30 PM at the Club Workshop to make cabochons. The children will meet at 6:30 PM on Monday, July 7 before our general meeting for an activity. Mary Beth thanked the two Wingate children for their help on the Wheel and the Silent Auction at the recent show. The Kid's Club will have an auction of 3 man-made gemstones this evening to help pay for their activities. They are also selling inexpensive greeting cards.

Field Trip Chairman, Bruce Wingate, reminded members that we will be traveling to Enterprise, Utah on Saturday, June 21 to collect Indian Blanket Jasper. See details in the June newsletter and call Bruce at 547-6590 for further information. Signups with a telephone number are requested during the refreshment break. This site can be accessed by regular auto. The next field trip will be on July 19.

After a 10 minute break for refreshments and signups, the business meeting resumed with the President entertaining us with three amusing jokes and stories from rockhounding newsletters from around the country.

Show Chair, Glenn Beye, gave a sincere thank-you to Rich Antonick and his wife, Nancy for taking charge of coordinating activities at our Show while he was out-of-town. The following volunteers were also commended for their time and effort.

The Telephone Committee who help get information out to all our members. The inventory volunteers who helped inventory supplies before the Show. Judi Auerswald who was in charge of the 20 display cases where members' collections are so beautifully presented. The Demonstrators of lapidary skills including Art Lory, Mona Howells, Ed Rupprecht, Jaen Rupprecht, Larry Grillett, and Art Patton. Ron Antoku who was in charge of the sandpile filled with hidden gemstones. Roger Olson who headed the popular geode-cutting group. Tom Gergits and Sue Husch who manned the personalized pencil booth. Diane Hale and her daughter, Brianna who set up the Silent auctions and the big Raffle. All the members who ran the Wheel, took new memberships, sold rock creations, and sold Raffle tickets, etc. Members who provided trucks to transport display cases and supplies to and from Cashman Center. Members who donated items for the Raffle and Silent Auctions, etc. especially the handmade quilt made by Jaen Rupprecht and her helpers. Treasurer David Finch who was at the show Thursday through Sunday to coordinate money distribution and collection and then prepared the Final Report on income earned for tonight.

President Edmonds requested member input for sites where we could hold a picnic or BBQ later in the year. Sites suggested were the club's Ore Car Mine site, Floyd Lamb State Park, Spring Mt. State Park, Rainbow Canyon, and Kokoweef. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM and was followed by the two raffle drawings with the grand prize being the synthetic rock Helenite made from rocks found at Mt St. Helens after the latest eruption with its intense heat.

# July 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Club Meeting	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 Board Meeting	15	16	17	18	19 Field Trip
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## Class Schedule

**Cabochon**—Every Wednesday from 6 until 9. Call Ed Rupprecht at 459-8747 to schedule.

**Beadworking**—Every Wednesday from 6 until 9 (Some Saturday classes may be available.). Call Jaen Reupprecht at 459-8747 to schedule.

**Faceting**—Every Thursday from 6 until 9. Call Art Lory at 648-3816 to schedule.

**Silver Smithing**—Every Tuesday from 6:30 until 9

**Wire Wrapping**—Saturdays. Call Jaen Reupprecht at 459-747 to schedule.

Call the instructors to schedule yourself into a class and to get the fees, material costs, and tools needed

## Shop Schedule

Monday: 12 to 4, and 6 until 9

Tuesday: 12 until 4

Wednesday: 12 to 4, and 6 until 9

Saturday: By appointment. Call 459-8747 to schedule.

### Instructors

**Cabochons:** Ed Rupprecht 459-8747

**Faceting:** Art Lory 648-3816

**Wirewrapping:** Jaen Rupprecht 459-8747

**Beading:** Jaen Rupprecht 459-8747

**Silver Smithing:** Mona Howells 645-3587

## July Birthdays

Name	Day	Name	Day
Carl Rogers	1	Maxine Ingram	19
David Rogers	1	George Messenger	20
Mike Ware	4	Dennis Pence	21
Lloyd Faihor	5	Brian Vincent	21
Robert Avery	5	Nick Pietsch	21
Murray Korman	6	David Rogers	23
Maryanne Hanks	7	Barbara Smigel	23
Ellen Reeves	8	Joanne Klumpos	24
Philip Krumpus	16	Duglas Roberts	25
Alan Wise	17	Gregory Cordes	29
Maria Corn	18	Robert Power	31
Duane Beye	19		



**Our Past**

Submitted by Bruno and Phyllis Syzdek

These letters were printed in the May 1984 issue of the Polished Slab.

*B.*

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# THANKS FROM CCGC'S UNLV SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

April 26, 1984

Dear CCGC Members:

As a student majoring in Geology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and recipient of a scholarship made available by your organization, I would like to express my sincerest appreciation for the opportunity which this has afforded me. As you are no doubt aware, it is becoming increasingly difficult for students to meet the financial demands placed upon them. With rising tuition and the cost of books and other, essential materials, not to mention the cost of living in general, it often becomes questionable as to whether or not a diploma is an attainable goal.

In my own case, the financial assistance provided by your scholarship program has virtually assured that I will complete my degree requirements. One of these requirements is a six credit summer field camp which I will now be able to attend, knowing that the regular semester tuitions for the academic year 1984-1985 will be paid by the scholarship.

Regardless of the fact that I personally was awarded a scholarship, I would like your membership to know that I have great respect for your organization and the fine thing which you are doing by assisting students in this manner. The significance of your altruism may well be greater than you have imagined.

Sincerely,

David A. Furbust  
The Polished Slab, July 2003

April 15, 1984

Dear Members:

Please, accept my deepest appreciation for the scholarship recently awarded to me which was made available to the UNLV Geology department by your group.

From your own experience you all know that attending a university can be a very expensive endeavor. Acquiring a science degree is often even more difficult to afford because of unusual expenses. Geology degrees include the most unusual and extreme of expenses -summer field camp. It is certainly to the benefit of UNLV's Geology students that you all are aware of how much we need your help.

This scholarship will enable me to attend field camp, thus aiding me to overcome what surely would have been a nearly insurmountable financial obstacle. I, personally am very grateful that you all feel it necessary to provide scholarships to potential geologists attending UNLV.

Again, thank you.

Sincerely,

Carol M. Patterson

# By and Beye

*Glenn Beye*

Well folks, the show is over and you did a really great job. You made over \$1,800.00 for the club. This was our first show as Southern Nevada Gem & Mineral Society.

A Big Thanks to Rich and Nancy Antonick. Rich innocently accepted the job of filling in during the absence of the show chairman and he was super.

Tom Gergits and Sue Husch Sold Pencils and donated all proceeds to the club \$95.00.

Thanks to our membership assistant, Priscilla Messenger, Thirty-six ( 36 ) New Members signed up during the show.

It was due to Judi Auerswald that twenty three ( 23 ) display cases decorated the halls.

Talented demonstrators were present in at least five major skills due to Jaen Rupprecht's dedication to arts and crafts. Art Lory Faceting, Robert skulsky faceting , Ed Rupprecht cabochons, Mona Howells silver smithing, Jaen Rupprecht beads and wire wrapping, Larry Grillett cabochons. and Arthur Patton Lost Wax and Gold injection.

Roger Olsen made sure the geode saws never seemed to stop. Over \$400.00.

Ron Antoku thinks maybe never has the same dirt been dug up so many times to display what seems to be an inexhaustible supply of precious gems.

The wheel is still ringing out that jingle, "Every one's a winner." From Dave Finch, And "EVERY ONE'S A WINNER" FROM JOE LAVRYK .

**Diane Hale** said, "Donations came seemingly from nowhere and made the silent auction and raffles successful." Many items were given unanimously.

Ninety-four persons signed in as helpers, still others never signed in. We had Trucks to bring over supplies from storage, and folks came in to help set up the areas Thursday prior to the show. We had more trucks and help to break down the displays Sunday. By 7:00 PM every thing was back in storage. There was still yet one more job.

Scott Cramer volunteered his truck to bring all the loose rough from the storage to the shop, and give a safe power lifting lesson to us all.

There were others that helped, The Phone Gang helped with calling over 200 calls asking for volunteers, and at least three teams have been out to the storage area, with Jet Erikson, organizing and cataloging supplies. Do not forget out state symbol that was brought in from Desert Outfitters by Rick Kasky.

Display cases were filled by:

Ron Antoku, Roy Beeson, Angie Cervantes, Jet Erikson with Joan Fortier, Diane Hale with Mrs. Otteson, Mona Howells, Scott Kramer, Bill Lemon. Art Lory. Lynn Manther. Evarae Mc Affee, Maxine Riggs, Sharon Rosenburg, Ed Rupprecht, Jane Rupprecht, Ray Simpson who gave his silver display in a special Federation Case. David and Gail Snieder, and the student Case. Wow, Thank you all.

Donations to the show came from several sources, Some we will never know. Frank Aureswald made several rock drawings, Ed, Jaen, and Doris Heinrich, made the patriotic quilt that Diane Hale won. Diane Hale donated the Salt crystal and several necklaces and an umbrella. Ron Antuko gave a tent. other prizes included Rock specimens, pillow cases, binoculars, Dutch oven, tool kits, ring holder, Photo tree, decorative night light, beaded bracelets, and a car care kit. Pant, Pant and more.

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## Recovery Help Needed in Shop

Tammie Leary

Jaen needs help with recovering the seat cushions for the stools in the shop. She has the supplies; just needs the talent. Anyone interested should call her at 459-8747.

## Club Member Len Mahoney Passes Away

J.L. Foutz

It was recently learned that Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society member Len Mahoney passed away March 19.

He was also an active member of the Pahrump valley Rockhounds. The club newlsetter, *the Rocky Road*, eulogized him as "very involved in all club functions. He served as an officer, was a leader of a lot of field trips, and had a great deal of knowledge that he shared with us. He will be greatly missed by all."

## Unsupported Zoo Needs Rocks and Gems

Glenn Beye

The Las Vegas Zoo on N. Rancho is a privately owned activity, not supported by the county or the city.

The Las Vegas Gem Club had exhibitions in the snake display and in a gift shop display case. The display is dirty and corroded and has information about the club that is out of date.

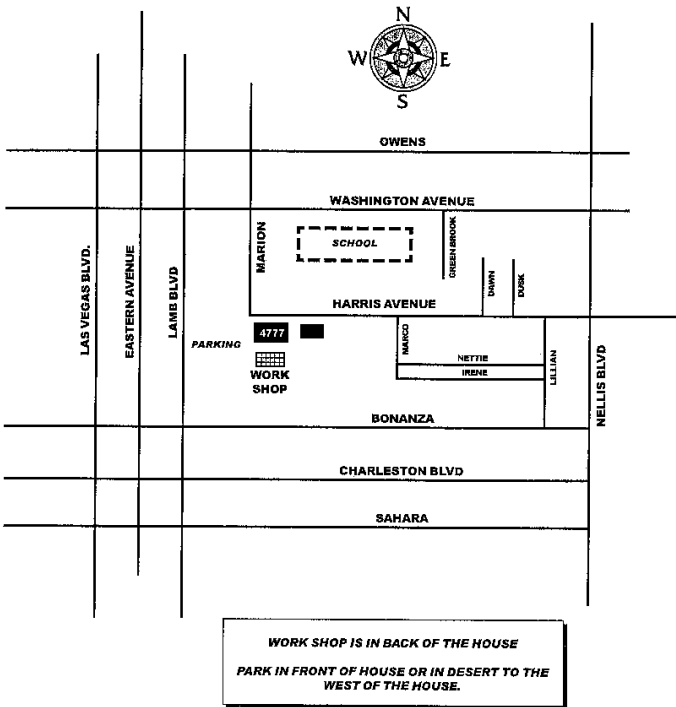
Art Lory and Glenn Beye have met with the zoo management and have started to Improve the display in the gift shop. Much can be done to improve displays in the snake displays.

The club members could give rocks, any size, but the larger rocks are desirable. They do not have to be gem quality. Any specimen which can be identified with a label would be great.

I am asking club members who would be happy to unload some specimens to contact the zoo for disposal: Pat Dingle 647-4685, Or Mary Beth Paladino 255 1647. Mary Beth has ask the zoo owner, Pat Dingle to be a speaker in the near future.

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## Mineral Identification—How Hard Can It Be? (cont.)

Mohs' list of minerals from softest to hardest are:

- 1 = Talc**
- 2 = Gypsum**
- 3 = Calcite**
- 4 = Fluorite**
- 5 = Apatite (fluorapatite)**
- 6 = Orthoclase**
- 7 = Quartz**
- 8 = Topaz**
- 9 = Corundum**
- 10 = Diamond**

Except for the diamond, these minerals were probably selected for their availability as well as their differing hardness, for the scale is far from linear. For example, diamond is something like four times harder than corundum at 9; while fluorite at 4 is only slightly harder than calcite at 3.

Testing kits are available, but a practical scale can be easily and cheaply assembled using items around the shop. For example, your fingernail has a hardness of 2.5, a penny is 3 (before 1984), and a knife is 5.5. Add a streak plate, which has a hardness of 6.5 and you have a lab that fits in your pocket.

Most mineralogy texts give tables of mineral hardness. Particularly complete and useful tables appear in John Sinkankas' "Gemstone and Mineral Data Book."

Hardness testing requires some skill and practice. You need a good surface or edge on your unknown. Sometimes it's easier to scratch the unknown across the sample. Press hard enough to good effect, but not so hard as to fracture either sample. Practice will help you find proper level of stress to exert.

Look for a scratch. Rub aside any powder to find a distinct scratch. Calcite will leave a trail of powder across quartz. Rub away the powder and you'll find the quartz unharmed. A hand lens is a good tool for finding a scratch.

Through several tests, you can bracket the hardness of the unknown between two standards; harder than a fingernail, softer than a penny.

The ease with which one substance scratches another is also useful. Quartz easily scratches calcite, telling of a large hardness difference. Quartz will scratch feldspar with much more difficulty. When testing a standard against an unknown that is of equal hardness, both substances will leave shallow scratches on each other.

The hardness of a particular mineral may vary with direction within the same grain such as Kyanite. Kyanite generally occurs in long bladed crystals. The hardness taken the short way across the blade has a hardness of 7 the hardness taken the long way along the same grain will be 4. The hardness of Muscovite is 2.5 when taken across the flat surface of a cleavage sheet, but 4 when taken across the grain of a book.

The reason hardness varies in this way is that the strength of the bonds holding the mineral together can be significantly different in different directions in the mineral. In most minerals this difference with direction is minor and doesn't affect the test. With kyanite or Muscovite, this difference in hardness is a confirming test by itself.

Some minerals' hardness may vary from sample to sample, depending on that mineral's exact chemical composition. Hornblende's hardness can vary from 5 to 6, meaning some hornblende is softer than glass, some harder. This reflects that hornblende can accommodate varying amounts of sodium, calcium, iron and magnesium in its structure, which affect the details of its chemical bonding, hence its hardness.

Reference: Chesterman, Charles and Lowe, Kurt; *National Audubon Society Field Guide to Rocks and Minerals*. New York: Alfred A Knopf, Inc., 1979.

## Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society

P.O. Box 94744, Las Vegas NV 89193

HTTP://www.sngms.org

E-mail: admin@sngms.com

The Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society was organized to educate ourselves and the community in the science and arts related to rocks, mineral, 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. We are incorporated for the purpose of promoting an active interest in Geology, Gemology and facilitate an improvement in knowledge of the art of cutting, polishing, collecting and displaying gems. We began in 1932, and became the Southern Nevada Gem and Mineral Society in 2003. The very first Polished Slab was published in 1940 by Paul Mercer.

### Officers - Board of Director - Committee Chairmen

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Editors: Please send exchanges to: Polished Slab Editor *P.O. Box 94774 Las Vegas NV 89193*

The Polished Slab, July 2003

**Club Gemstone:** Turquoise

**Club Colors:** Turquoise and Silver

**Club Logo:** Arrowhead

**Club Motto:** Rocks-R Us

**Annual Dues**

**Individual:** \$10.00

**Family:** \$15.00

Club / Membership Name Badges are available at \$8 each

Meetings: 7:00 PM the first Monday of each month at the Senior Center 450 Bonanza at Las Vegas Boulevard Las Vegas, Nevada 702-229-6454

Visitors are always welcome.

Please bring a friend or two.

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