

October 2025 Volume 66 Issue 7

SKAGIT GEMS

Official Publication of the Skagit Rock and Gem Club
Serving Skagit County WA Since 1961

Next Meeting:

October 4, 2025 10:00 a.m. @ Mount Vernon Senior Center

Refreshments: Feel Free To Bring Snacks or Refreshments

Reminder: Annual Club Dues are due!

Gem of the Month: Jasper

Color: Blue

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Skagit Rock & Gem Club member Sherry Broome on September 9th. Sherry will be greatly missed by everyone who knew her. Her contributions to the club were invaluable, and she will always be remembered in the hearts of her community.

A celebration of her life is being planned for sometime in October. Club members are invited to join Sherry's many friends and family in honoring her memory. The exact date of the celebration has not yet been determined. A notice will be sent out to all club members once the time and location are confirmed.

Things to Do:

- Volunteer for November Annual Show
- Plan your showcase
- Become a Skagit Rock & Gem Club Officer
- Renew Skagit Rock & Gem Club Annual Membership (If you haven't already done so)

Our President and Secretary, Rick Van Pelt and Peggy Peterson, went to Anacortes on September 12th to meet with Steve Latham, where they spent over four hours identifying his extensive collection of cabochons, slabs, and a wide variety of raw material. In his appreciation for their help, he made a very generous donation of \$100.00 to the club. We are very grateful for his generosity.

He is hoping to have a retail sale in Anacortes sometime between Christmas and mid-January for rock club members.

Addendum – A week later member, Bruce Hurley, geologist, also met with Steve Latham to further assist in identifying his extensive collection.

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From the Editor:

With our Annual Show coming up in November, it is time to take action if you haven't already! We have many new members that will be pitching in, which makes this event even more exciting.

As this is our club's primary event of the year, we are always in need of more volunteers, so be sure to come to the October meeting and get involved and sign up. Whether taking on the position of Door Greeter, manning the Spinning Wheel, assisting with Kid's Crafts, or selling Raffle Tickets, you will have a great time while helping the club, as this is where most of the funding for our club expenses comes from.

You can also show off your skills demonstrating your craft or educating our visitors with information on something you specialize in. Micah will be demonstrating his faceting skills again this year!

And speaking of showing off, let us know if you are planning on putting together a showcase, we want to be sure there are enough for everyone wanting to put one together. Maybe you want to give our visitors a spectacular specimen to wow them, something whimsical to put a smile on their faces, or an artsy or educational display to give them something to think about. Whatever you have in mind, now is the time to start planning. We've all got some pretty cool stuff to share, so now's the time to show it off!

We thank and appreciate all who have already volunteered for the show. We couldn't do it without you! Remember, we will be back in our original location at the Sedro-Woolley Community Center, 703 Pacific Street.

Skagit Rock & Gem Club has been around for decades and that continued existence has endured because of both our dedicated long-time, and our newer member's commitment and interest in the study of geology, lapidary, and the collection of geological specimens. We will soon be nominating officers for 2026 and it would be great for both our established and newer members to consider an office position.

See you at the October meeting.

Charlene

Time Again for Dues!

Once again, dues are due. Your yearly dues cover membership privileges from September 1st through August 31st.

Please pay dues if you would like to continue your membership and receive the newsletter. Membership dues must be paid to use the club shop.

Membership forms are available at every meeting. Invite your "rockhound" friends to our next one!

Dues are \$20.00 for single membership, \$30.00 for family, and \$25.00 for single, plus kid(s) under age 16.

Payment can be made by cash or check at a meeting or by mailing the form and payment to address below:

**Skagit Rock & Gem Club
PO Box 244
Mount Vernon, WA 98273**





VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

Meetings are on the **FIRST Saturday** of the month except for Jan, July and Dec) **10:00 am** at the **Mount Vernon Community (Senior) Center**
1401 Cleveland St.
Mount Vernon WA 98273



The purpose of this non-profit earth society shall be to stimulate interest in the study of geology, lapidary, and the collection of geological specimens.



We are a member of the Northwest Federation of Mineralogical Societies and the Washington State Mineral Council.



We are affiliated with the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies.

Dues are \$20.00 for single membership, \$30.00 for family, and \$25.00 for single, plus kid(s) under age 16.

Visit our website: skagitrockandgem.com

Email: skagitrockandgem@gmail.com

Mailing address:

PO BOX 244 , Mount Vernon WA 98273



2025 Officers & Board Members

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| President | • Rick Van Pelt
360-708-2737 |
| Vice President | • Peggy Peterson
425-299-4123 |
| Treasurer | • Open |
| Secretary | • Jennifer Ross
360-610-1227 |
| Fed. Director | • Open |
| Past President | • Eric Self
360-366-6118 |
| Bulletin Editor | • Charlene Rhodes
360-333-2156 |



Committees

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Annual Show Chair | Eric Self |
| Facilities/Field Trips | Open |
| Greeter | Peggy Peterson |
| Scholarship | Kim Kellems
and Shelley Van Pelt |
| Publicity | Open |
| Sunshine | Open |
| Swap | Vandenberg's |

Every pebble has a story to tell...

Skagit Rock and Gem Club Meeting Minutes September 6, 2025

Meeting called to order at 10:07 AM by club president Rick Van Pelt

Board Members present: Rick Van Pelt, Peggy Peterson, Jennifer Ross, Eric Self

Attendance: 15 members and 4 guests, Emily McQuarrie, Sharon Roodzant, Mel Starr, Buzz Mersereau

Minutes of last meeting were accepted as amended:

1. Peggy conveyed Sandy's thanks to members who assisted with the Skagit Garden Club table and noted that we have been invited back next year.
2. Peggy also urged members to contact local officials to protest the planned demolition of the Mount Vernon Senior Center.

Treasurer report was accepted.

Old Business

The Skagit Rock and Gem Show will be held on November 8th and 9th at the Sedro Woolley Community Center, 715 Pacific St, Sedro-Woolley.

Sign-up sheets were passed around and the need for volunteers was stressed. Volunteers are needed to help with a variety of tasks including set-up and tear-down, greeting guests, kids table, silent auction and door prizes.

Members were encouraged to sign up for display cases as well.

Peggy reported that vendors have been confirmed.

The need for new LED lights in the display cases was also discussed. Eric and Rick are addressing the lights and other supplies such as tickets for the raffle.

Eric confirmed that a food concession will be operating at the show.

New Business

We are nearing the time to choose officers for 2026. Officers are chosen in December and installed in January.

David is taking a temporary leave of absence as treasurer to handle personal issues.

Guest Buzz Mersereau announced that he would like to donate many buckets of rocks to the club, but needs help moving the material. Ray DeVries volunteered to assist and will coordinate with Buzz.

Continued next page...

Announcements

Yearly dues are due. The current individual membership cost is \$20 and is payable in cash or by check to Skagit Rock and Gem Club.

Peggy let the membership know that Sherry Broom has entered hospice following a series of strokes over the last two months. She will remain in contact with Sherry's family and convey the thoughts and best wishes of the members.

Please contact Rick Van Pelt to schedule time in the rock shop. Please give at least 24 hours notice. There is a \$5.00 fee per day of use. At this time members are supervised in the shop until they demonstrate proficiency and safety with the machines.

Upcoming shows include:

Rock Rendezvous (Mt. Baker Rock and Gem Club) on September 27th and 28th, from 9-5, at the Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry Street, Ferndale.

RocktoberFest (Marysville Rock and Gem Club) on October 4th and 5th, 10-5, at the Evergreen State Fairground, Bldg 500, 11405 179th Avenue SE, Monroe.

Program

No program was presented at this meeting.

Show and Tell - Agate

David brought a specimen of agate from the Cadman quarry in Monroe, and another agate from Mount Airy, Nevada. David also bought a large specimen of diorite, an intrusive igneous rock, from the Wenatchee River area. He reported that the rock had been used to build up part of the road and was likely sourced locally.

Alissa had carnelian and other gates from the Goldendale area where she has property. She also had a cut section of a Botswana agate.

Mel brought a tub of polished slabs and pieces from Stanwood and other local sites.

Eric bought a slab of Graveyard agate.

Rick had a collection of Mount Baker blue agates from Swift Creek and a Holly blue from Oregon. He commented that the most popular collecting site just off the highway appears to be picked out at this time.

Peggy brought a snakeskin agate from Montana.

Meeting adjourned at 11:37 AM

The Beauty & Wonder Of Jasper

Precious stones have captured people's imagination since antiquity. Their vibrant colors, clarity, shimmer, and above all rarity have made them the treasures of kings, nobles, and merchant magnates who have used them as repositories of wealth, prestige, and power.

Despite their historic monopoly by the elites, the masses have also been drawn to and beguiled by these stones. Neither in the past nor today are people able to resist their allure or stifle their own sense of wonder and awe when presented with a diamond ring, a string of pearls, or the humongous geological miracles housed in places like the Tower of London or the Dalí museum in Figueres.

Not all precious stones are gems, however, and not all are so ostentatious and dazzling. Jasper is a semiprecious rock with a more refined nature and a wider variety of species and "looks." Its flowing bands and frosty rings have been compared to the ocean, fire, jungles, and the earthen landscape itself. Jasper has been a prized medium of jewelers for millennia, and more recently has inspired painters, sculptors, photographers, and artists of all kinds. In many ways, jasper is more revealing of the reasons why people are so fascinated with shiny and colorful rocks than are the more hallowed diamonds, emeralds, and rubies.



Agate and Jasper Macro Photography

I have always enjoyed abstract nature photography and take every opportunity to find interesting colors, patterns and shapes found in nature, creating a small part of the nature photography prints I produce for collectors around the world.

When Covid struck, the majority of the world isolated at home for what seemed like forever. The creative outlet that nature photography provides me was severed. One day while browsing the internet I ran across an image of a beautiful stone with incredible abstract qualities. I decided to purchase the stone to see if I could photograph it, creating an abstract art piece in the process.

What started as an experiment, quickly grew to a small obsession, seeking out larger, rarer and more beautiful stones in the process of creating a gallery of these natural abstract images. I have met many interesting and very kind people along the way, many of them very passionate collectors of the world's finest semi-precious stones. After photographing each piece, I place it back on the internet for sale and the cycle continues, looking for the most interesting stones I can find. Many of the very best stones cannot be bought, as they are priceless treasures for those who collect them.

A Short History of Jasper

Jasper is a silica-based mineral composed of chalcedony and quartz. When this mixture is translucent, it is called agate, when opaque, it's known as jasper.

Jasper is nearly as old as the Earth itself. Stromatolites, fossilized remnants of the planet's first algae and over four billion years old, are made of jasper. Jasper artifacts have been found in archaeological sites dating back over seven thousand years, and the stone saw widespread use in Mesopotamia, Persia, Egypt and many other early empires.



In the Americas, it was used by indigenous societies as a talisman of health and rebirth. By the medieval period, it had spread across Europe and become part of the standard catalog of precious and prestigious minerals.

Because of its widespread use, there are dozens if not hundreds of historic names for the stone, which have gradually coalesced into the modern English "jasper." This is also a result of the large number of mining locations for the stone around the world, some of the better known varieties coming from India, Madagascar, Brazil, Australia, Uruguay, Egypt, Russia, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, and the United States.

Though used and valued in the Americas for over a thousand years, many of the mines in the U.S. are new, having been discovered after 1800. The mines of the West, in places like California, Utah, Idaho, Oregon, and elsewhere, are especially well known, and specimens originating from these areas are among the finest and most visually stunning of all jaspers. It is these western jaspers which showcase best what had made them so popular and sought after over time.



My Favorite Three Types of Jasper

Morrisonite Jasper

Morrisonite is in the Oregon family of jaspers. Oregon's beaches are littered with agates and other forms of chalcedony, and its interior geology is likewise dotted with hidden deposits.

Quite often a certain gem stone or mineral is named for the person by whom it was first discovered. Being new, it must be given a name, and what is more fitting than that it be given the name of the one who first brought it to public notice?

And that is the reason one of the most outstanding ornamental gem stones found in Malheur county, eastern Oregon is known as "Morrisonite," named for James Morrison, who for a half century has made his home in a canyon of the Owyhee river some six or eight miles above the discontinued post office of Watson. During those years Mr. Morrison has explored much of that rugged area known locally as the Owyhee breaks. Deeply interested in Indian lore, Mr. Morrison has accumulated a large collection of Indian artifacts most of which he found at old campsites and in caves along the river.

Word of his findings reached a gem club in neighboring Idaho, which then publicized the find. Despite the massive popularity of this variety, it has only been found at a single site which has, decades later, still yielded only a small collection of specimens. Since the BLM took ownership of the area, safety concerns have led to the whole area being closed off.

Morrisonite jaspers are known for their soft blue coloration which may appear as scalloped, overlapping areas or large unbroken fields. These are usually flanked by golden or ruddy fringes which serve to frame and enclose them like azure pools. In other specimens, gold bands crisscross the blue areas, creating a marbled effect. Still other less common varieties showcase an interplay of reds, yellows, and especially pale spring greens. These latter can at times be almost translucent, making them seem similar in appearance to agates or even jade.



Blue Mountain Jasper

Blue Mountain jasper is found in Oregon, on the south end of the Blue Mountains, just a few miles north of McDermitt, Nevada. This jasper has color combinations similar to those of the morrisonite found about 80 miles to the north. While morrisonite is formed in veins, the Blue Mountain jasper is more nodular in shape, even though the two types are formed in similar rock. Leonard Kapcinsky put the deposit under claim in 1967, and he still has two claims in the area. The deposit worked a couple of times, but no new material has been mined for over 30 years.

Whereas Morrisonite is known for its more gentle and lighter blues, Blue Mountain jasper has a much darker color palette, full of emerald greens, teals, and shades of olive. These hues are usually organized in banded or concentric gradients which move from almost blackish greens up to pale greys and shades of seafoam. These colorful patches are, in turn, surrounded by a more mottled and rough crust of beige and brown, often making specimens appear similar to geodes. Blue Mountain Jasper is seen as one of the finest of the “picture jaspers”—jaspers whose unique characteristics resemble landscapes or other geological formations. Blue Mountain specimens can, at times, look like rolling hills, deep forests, or forming shorelines seen from above. In this way, collecting Blue Mountain and other kinds of picture jaspers is much like collecting works of art.

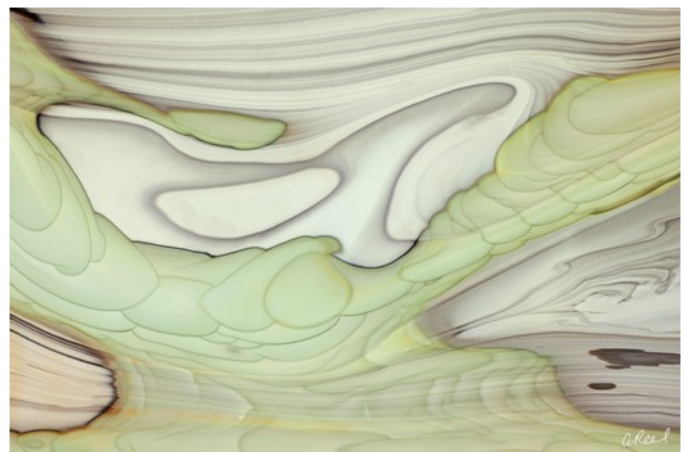


Willow Creek Jasper

Willow Creek jasper hails from nearby Idaho, mined just north of Boise in the area around Boise National Forest. The Mine is owned by Larry Ridley and mined by him and his son Kevin. This kind of jasper is formed inside natural spheroid conglomerations called thundereggs. Some of these thundereggs are up to 10 feet in diameter. The outside is a hard Rhyolite. The thundereggs must be broken opened using drills, sledgehammers and wedges. Unfortunately not every egg found contains the prized Jasper, in fact only about 7 out of 8 of the eggs do!

Unlike Morrisonite or Blue Mountain, Willow Creek jasper is a porcelain jasper. Porcelain jaspers are defined by their resemblance to shards of porcelain which have been glued back together. Soft fields of white and shades of pink are linked by darker lines into something which truly does resemble a repaired dish. Less common specimens also include bluish greys, pale greens, and yellows.

While less gem-like in appearance, Willow Creek jasper is renowned for its delicate pastel colors and flawlessly smooth fields of color. Much of the Willow Creek for sale on the internet is forged or low quality, and the specimens which live up to the reputation ascribed to this type command high prices.



of

The Beauty of Jasper

Jaspers are appreciated not only for their history, rarity, and variety, but for the unique character of individual pieces. While diamonds and other translucent gemstones may be interesting from a technical and geological perspective, the allure of jasper is thoroughly artistic.

Some artists working in the realm of sculpting have used expert cutting techniques to bring out the hidden landscapes in certain jaspers. They then frame or hang them and present them as artworks in and of themselves. Painters have drawn inspiration from jasper as well, drawing ideas and inspiration from the ordered randomness and using them as the basis for works on canvas.

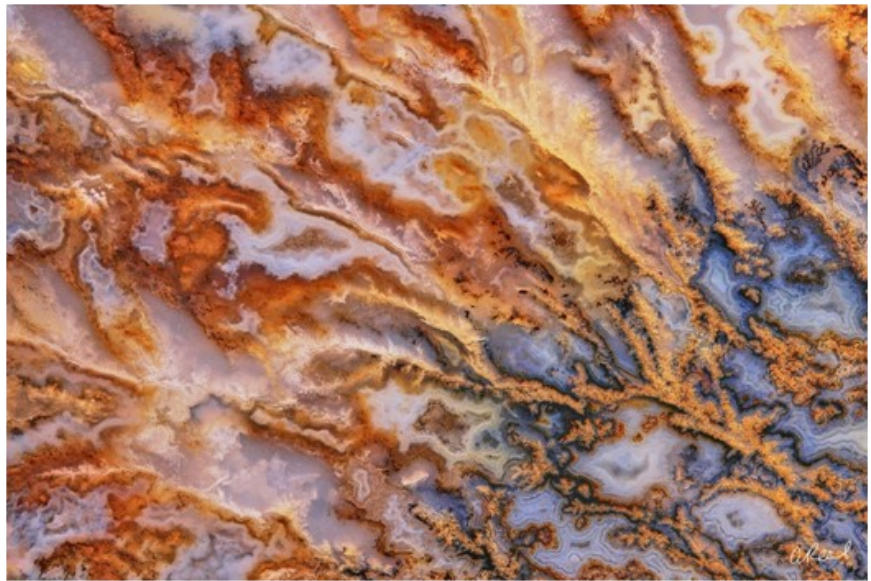
Photographers have been especially taken with jasper's wild forms and the delicate interplay of shades and colors. Many have used macrophotography to capture this minute world of chaos and harmony, blowing the images up to create fine art prints resembling both the redrock canyons of the American Southwest and the fiery storms of Jupiter.

These more modern and abstract kinds of rock art are part of the magic of jasper—something both of the earth and a reflection of it. People will always be on the hunt for new deposits of these semi precious wonders, and with all the different varieties and locations already known, it's easy to find something which speaks to you as either a collector or an artist.

For Those About To Rock

For my fellow photographers who may be interested in trying out their own hand at jasper photography, I have a few recommendations. You will want the stones to be flat. These lapidary slabs are often bought and sold to those who cut and polish them into jewelry of different forms. The largest and most beautiful slabs are sometimes saved from the chopping block and highly polished to become display pieces. These are my favorite and the easiest stones to photograph.

There are natural cracks & crevices, surface scratches and textures that make the process of photographing many stones well a challenge. If they are polished, half of these distractions are eliminated. If unpolished, I found painting water onto them with a paintbrush or submerging them in water or denatured alcohol, achieves a similar effect to polish, although it is a greater challenge to create sharp images this way.



The Abstract Rock Shop

After two years of buying and selling high grade jasper and agates to collectors around the world, in December 2023 I launched The Abstract Rock Shop, a website to offer specimens and share my love for abstract photography showcasing the beauty of these amazing treasures of nature.

Source: <https://www.abstractrockshop.com/gallery/jasper-morrisonite-photography-art/>

Washington State Rock & Gem Show Dates

October 2025

4-5—MONROE, WASHINGTON: Show and sale; Marysville Rock and Gem Club; Evergreen Fairgrounds, 14405 179th Ave SE, Building 500; Sat. 10-5; Free; The 49th Annual "Rocktoberfest" Rock, Jewelry, and Mineral Show & Sale Demonstrators, Dealers, Exhibits, Raffle Drawings, Door Prizes, Food Service, Espresso & Elephant Ears Special Display - Dino Skull; contact Brian Murril, (425) 346-9313; Email: bmurril@aol.com; Website: marysvillerockclub.com

November 2025

8-9—SEDRO-WOOLLEY, WASHINGTON: 65th Annual Show; Sedro-Woolley Community Center, 703 Pacific Street; Saturday 9-5, Sunday 10-4; Free admission; Gems, Minerals, Jewelry, and more; Kids activities, demonstrations, displays, hourly door prizes, raffles, and more!

14-16—PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire; Washington State Fair Events Center, 110 9th Ave SW; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; \$7 weekend pass; Fine jewelry, precious & semi-precious gemstones, millions of beads, crystals, gold & silver, minerals & much more at manufacturer's prices. Buy direct from the importers & wholesalers. Jewelry repair & cleaning while you shop; contact Yooy Nelson, (503) 252-8300; Email: info@gemfaire.com; Website: <http://www.gemfaire.com>

22-23—BREMERTON, WASHINGTON: Annual show; Kitsap Mineral & Gem Society; Kitsap Fairgrounds and Events Center, Presidents Hall, 1250 Fairgrounds Rd NW; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; Free Admission; Come to our annual Fall Festival of Gems! Kitsap Mineral and Gem Society is proud to present our annual show once again. Come for family fun, a silent auction, juniors' activities, demos, vendors and so much more! For over 85 years, we have been a club, and for nearly 40, we have been hosting a show; contact Danielle Foss; Email: kmgfallshow@gmail.com; Website: www.kmgrockclub.com

<https://www.rockngem.com/ShowDatesFiles/ShowDatesDisplayAll.php?ShowState=WA>

Coming right up!

Rock Rendezvous (Mt. Baker Rock and Gem Club) on September 27th and 28th, from 9-5, at the Pioneer Pavilion Community Center, 2007 Cherry Street, Ferndale.

RocktoberFest (Marysville Rock and Gem Club) on October 4th and 5th, 10-5, at the Evergreen State Fairground, Bldg 500, 11405 179th Avenue SE, Monroe.



2025 WSMC SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS

The WA St. Mineral Council plans guided fieldtrips to collecting sites. Open to member clubs, and the general public. Most trips are free. Included are the Pow Wow trips (must join to go on trips). Host clubs and contact persons will be set up as I gather info.

For updated info, go to mineralcouncil@zoho.com or contact Nique Wicks at nwhoppy-frog41@gmail.com (509) 670-0630 or Ed Lehman at wsmced2@outlook.com (425) 334-6282

The Council Reporter

Date	Host	Site	Material	Meet Time/Place	Tools
01/18	MSVL	Walker Valley	Blue agate	9am Big Lake Store	Dig & light hard rock tools
02/22	MSVL	Cedar Ponds	Jasper & fossils	9am Sultan Park 1 mile hike on road	Dig & light hard rock tools
03/08	MSVL	Cherry Creek	Jasper	9am Park & North end of Duvall Wading in creek, bushy	Rock hammer light hard rock tools
04/12	Pow-Wow	Saddle Mt	Petrified wood	8am Boat launch SW of Mattawa	Dig & Light hard rock tools or just pick up smaller pieces
05/10	MSVL	Racehorse Creek	Leaf fossils, morel mushrooms	9am 1-5 exit 240 Mini Mart	Shovel & rock splitting tools
05/24	MSVL	Wild Turkey mine	Noble serpentine	9am @ 3515 Waitts Lk Rd. Valley, WA Pay dig	Hard rock or surface picking
05/31	MSVL	Walt Bailey Trail	Rainbow chert	9am Verlot Ranger Station Collecting along roadside	Hard rock tools
06/21	WSMC	Saddle Mt	Petrified wood & opal	9am Harvest Foods, Mattawa	Dig & Light hard rock tools or surface picking
07/26	MSVL	Lake Wenatchee	Garnets	9am @ rest stop just West of Lake Wenatchee Hwy 2	Shovel, screen container for Garnets
08/16-17	Puyl	Greenwater	Agate, jasper, opal	9am Ranger Station in Enumclaw	Dig & Hard rock tools
09/06-07	Pow-Wow	Red Top	Agate, jasper, geodes	8am Teanaway Camp Ground	Dig & Hardrock tools
09/20	Puyl	Little Naches	Thunder eggs, fossils, lily-pad jasper	10am @ intersection of Hwy 410 & FR 92	Shovel, small bar
10/01	MSVL	Index	Picture jasper	9am @ Index	Rock hammer
11/08	MSVL	Blanchard Hill	Stilpnomelane (Dalmation stone)	9am @ 1-5 exit 240 Mini Mart Collecting on road shoulder	Hard rock tools

Many trips need Discover Pass, Trailhead Pass & Forest Pass.

Ask when you inquire about trip.

100 % of map booklet sales goes to Walker Valley lease, insurance for access to private property and general operation of WSMC

ALWAYS contact host for updated info a week before trip !!!

HOST CLUB CONTACT INFO

Msvl - Nique Wicks nwhoppyfrog41@gmail.com Or (509) 670-0630

Pow Wow -Larry Vess vessel3755@gmail.com or (253)473-3908

Puyl Nate White (206)349-7054 nate.white77@gmail.com

Keep updated on <http://www.mineralcouncil.zoho.com> Land management changes, and roads close regularly.

There is a area on web page with tool category in pictures and names of tools. Always have proper cloths and gear for conditions. Be prepared with safety, first aid, food and drink.

A week before trips I (Ed Lehman) will have a pdf file with map and info for that trip I can send you on request. I will do the same for trip host.

Try to be at the meeting site 30 minutes before trip time for details and instructions with a full tank of gas. Use code of ethics, keep our lands open to rockhounding.

Skagit Rock & Gem club *vs* Presents

Our 65th Annual Rock & Gem Show!

Held on Nov. 8th 9 - 5
& Nov. 9th 10 - 4

Find us at
Sedro-Woolley Community Center
703 Pacific St.

Here you will find gems,
minerals, jewelry, and
more!

FREE ADMISSION

Hourly door prizes - Vendors -
Demonstrations - Raffle -
Children's activities

skagitrockandgem@gmail.com
skagitrockandgem.com

Skagit Rock and Gem Club
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