

May 2022

Volume 62, Issue 3

# Skagit Gems

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

## Upcoming Local Gem Shows and Field Trips

**5/21 Marblemount**, Donation Fee at Mine. Meet @ 9:00 for Talc & Listwanite

**6/18 Verlot Ranger Station**, Meet@ 9:00 for Rainbow Chert. Bring Lite Hard Rock tools

Contact Ed Lehman for more information at [wsmced2@outlook.com](mailto:wsmced2@outlook.com) or h ph# (425) 334-6282 Cell# (425) 760-2786.

**Gem Show- May 28th-29th**, Everett Rock and Gem Club, NEW LOCATION: Evergreen State Fairgrounds, East entrance. 18359 Cascade View Dr., near Monroe, WA

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## **Madras Rock, Gem and Mineral Show**

June 23-26 2022  
9 AM - 6 PM

Jefferson County Fairgrounds  
Madras, Oregon

**FREE PARKING • FREE ADMISSION • FREE ENTERTAINMENT**

80+ dealers providing all your lapidary needs,  
daily field trips, activities, camping, nightly entertainment  
and all the fun you can handle.

Membership required for field trips  
Membership \$7.50 per person or \$15 per family, includes 17 yrs. & under

**GET YOUR SUPPLY OF**  
carvings • clocks & motors • crystals • faceted gemstones fossils • findings • intarsia jewelry • minerals • rock  
equipment • rough & polished rock, etc.

Sponsored by: All Rockhounds Pow-Wow Club of America, Inc.  
Contact: Larry Vess, [vessel3755@gmail.com](mailto:vessel3755@gmail.com) or (253)473-3908

## Letter from David Britten, Treasurer

In the past, there were many club members who participated in keeping the Skagit Rock and Gem Club up and running. As our membership aged, our more elderly members could no longer participate. Slowly the members participating dwindled. Fewer and fewer were able to step forward to do the tasks needed. Committee members, board members and officers all became harder positions to fill. There are many requirements of running a legal, safe, and enjoyable club of any kind. Clubs need people to organize, schedule, and oversee the financial aspects of any ongoing organization. Organizing, scheduling, and financing may not sound like much fun, but they are absolutely necessary so the fun can happen for everyone. Our Club in the year 2000 had a roster of over 100 happily dedicated members. Time has whittled away at the edges of this dedicated force. We don't know how many active members we have currently since we haven't had any meetings or collected dues in two years. Many people are interested in the search for and study of geological materials and related fossils but are not interested in the needs of a club. Are you ready to participate as a Skagit Rock and Gem Club member?

When I was "stronger", I, and a several others, took on multiple tasks and responsibilities of running the rock club. Now I do not feel so strong. I cannot do the things that I have done in the past. And, at the same time, I do not wish to see the things the club has to offer diminished. Monthly meetings give opportunities for fellowship and learning. We have a shop where the motivated can come to cut, grind, shape, and polish stones of all kinds, and where we can store promising specimens to be worked on by interested and motivated individuals at later dates or events during the year. Field trips offer explorations and fun outdoors.

We offer an Annual Show that provides educational displays for the public. We bring in vendors with a wide array of polished, faceted stones or crystal specimens available to purchase. We have fund-raising activities, like rock and jewelry sales, to provide monies for the upkeep of our shop and to offer annual scholarships to geology students at our local colleges and universities. At the annual show, we provide a table for younger "rockhounds" to do activities that keep them busy while their parents can indulge in purchasing items from our vendors or peruse our many display cases of specimens found or created by our own club

members. We also have a spinning wheel where the kids can purchase bags of polished rocks and a piece of candy at a reasonable cost. These proceeds go to support our club's activities, as well.

Our Annual Show has been held at the Sedro Woolley Community Center on the 2<sup>nd</sup> weekend of November for more than 30 years! (Not counting the last two years of Covid.) (Before Sedro Wooley, the show was at the Hillcrest Lodge in Mount Vernon for 20 years.) The Covid pandemic brought an abrupt end to all these club endeavors. It was not possible to meet in close quarters safely. Outdoor venues were sparse or not adequate for our needs. We were able to keep some connection thru The Skagit Gems by the grace of our amazing newsletter editor. We are attempting to return to our monthly meetings and regular activities. We know that there is much interest in getting back together.

We have all the equipment and transport that we need to do the Annual Show in November. What we need is dedicated, willing, and motivated individuals to commit to participating. If you are not averse to a little work along with the fun: show up, sign up, learn more. We need members to commit to participate or we will not be able to do the Annual Show. We need members to set up Friday before the Sat & Sun Annual Show; members to meet and greet the public during the Show; members to share their knowledge and love of rocks and rockhounding activities at the Show. Then there's taking down and packaging the show equipment on Sunday evening after the Show. It is a big three-day event with setup and take down. Lots of fun along the way even with the setting up and taking down. There are preshow planning activities and advertising to do; electrical setup; display cases to setup, and members to display in these cases. This is a major event for the Club. Planning and preparation for this show must start soon. Our vendors need to be notified soon and signed up by mid-July. Our location at the Sedro Woolley Community Center has been reserved and pre-paid. Should we not be able to put on the Show, (for one reason or another), we must notify Sedro Woolley in early August, or we forfeit the prepayment. The member commitment for the show depends on you. Are you interested? Are you ready and able to participate in the Annual Show?

If you are interested in having the Skagit Rock and Gem Club continue to be part of the community, let us know: Come to a meeting and sign up. Email or call a board officer with your interest. Let us know how you want to participate.

**What is Aquamarine?** Aquamarine is the name used for gem-quality specimens of the mineral beryl with in a color range of greenish blue to blue. The name is used regardless of a stone's tone or saturation. Most aquamarine has a very light color, which can be almost unnoticeable in very small stones. Stones with a rich blue color are the most popular. They are also the rarest and most valuable. The name aquamarine is derived from a combination



of two Latin words: aqua, meaning water, and marina, meaning the sea, so it is named for the color of the sea. Many people know it because it serves as the birthstone for the month of March. Aquamarine rings, earrings, and pendants are popular birthstone gifts. Aquamarine is best known as a highly transparent blue stone. Unlike emerald, the deep green variety of beryl, high-clarity, fracture-free aquamarine is abundant and more affordable. High-clarity, fracture-free stones are also more attractive. Aquamarine also occurs as a translucent stone that is often cut into beads and sometimes cut as cabochons. Necklaces strung with beads of pastel blue aquamarine and pastel pink morganite (both color-varieties of the mineral beryl) make a beautiful combination.

**Aquamarine Gemology** Aquamarine has a Mohs hardness of 7.5 to 8, making it one of the harder gemstones. Diamond, ruby, sapphire, topaz, and chrysoberyl are the only popular gemstones that are



significantly harder. However, aquamarine's tenacity is rated as brittle – which means that the gem can be easily chipped upon impact. A mounting that guards the stone from impact is an important precaution. The price of aquamarine is mainly determined by weight and the strength of its color. Gems with a faint blue color are abundant and inexpensive.

Gems with a rich blue color are much more expensive because rich color in aquamarine is very rare. A small aquamarine with a rich blue color will cost a lot more than identical-size stones with a faint blue color. It is available in a wide range of sizes. As the size of the gem increases, the strength of its apparent color will also increase. It can be difficult to find a small gem with a rich blue color, but as the size of the stone increases, the opportunity to find strong color also increases.

**Geological Occurrence** Most gem-quality aquamarine crystals form in cavities below the Earth's

surface during the late stages of a magma body's crystallization. The cavities provide open space for crystals to grow. The slow underground cooling rate provides the time needed for the development of large crystals. And, the late-stage timing provides the fluids and a supply of the beryllium needed to form beryl, a beryllium mineral. Aquamarine is usually found in granite pegmatites. Another source is from veins in metamorphic rocks that were mineralized by hydrothermal activity. If rocks containing aquamarine are exposed by weathering and erosion, the exceptional hardness of aquamarine will cause it to persist in overlying soils and stream sediments. Much aquamarine has been produced from stream sediments. When it is found in streams, it suggests that a primary deposit is located upstream.

**Sources of Aquamarine** Brazil has been the world's leading source of gem-quality aquamarine for over 100 years. It is found there in both pegmatites and alluvial deposits. Afghanistan, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Tanzania, and Zambia are all sources of aquamarine. India and Sri Lanka have long histories of aquamarine production from alluvial deposits. Aquamarine has been found at many locations in the United States. To date, almost all of the production has been from small-scale mining, often where multiple minerals are being produced.



**Synthetic Aquamarine** Synthetic aquamarine (lab-grown aquamarine) has been produced by hydrothermal growth methods in Russia since at least the 1980s and since the early 2000s in the Czech Republic. Some synthetic aquamarine receives its color from iron, like natural aquamarine. However, richly colored synthetic aquamarine has been produced using cobalt, copper, and nickel as sources of color. They are not found as sources of color in natural aquamarine. Much synthetic aquamarine can be separated from natural aquamarine by microscopic examination. However, the growth zoning structures used to identify synthetic aquamarine are more difficult to recognize, especially in light-colored material. Characteristic mineral inclusions and multiphase inclusions can be used to identify natural aquamarine. It is unusual to see jewelry items disclosed as synthetic aquamarine, lab-grown aquamarine, or other man-made descriptors. These materials may be uncommon in the marketplace or are simply sold without disclosure.

# Skagit Rock and Gem Club

## Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2022

Meeting called to order at 10:05am

Board Members present: Wes Frank, Debbie Frank, Eric Self

Guests: David, Larry and Kim, Rich, Jon and Kristal, Sandy, Maryanne, Don, Rob, Bruce, Erin and Elijah.  
Thank you for joining us! We hope to see you again!

All the guests received a prize. A big thank you to Greg Hochmuht, our President of Vice, for providing all the amazing flint arrowheads!!!! They were a big hit!

Wes discussed the need for Club Officers, specifically Vice President and Secretary. More on this later.

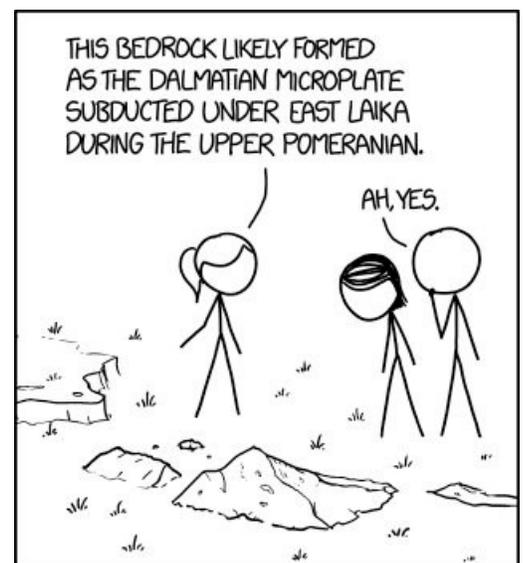
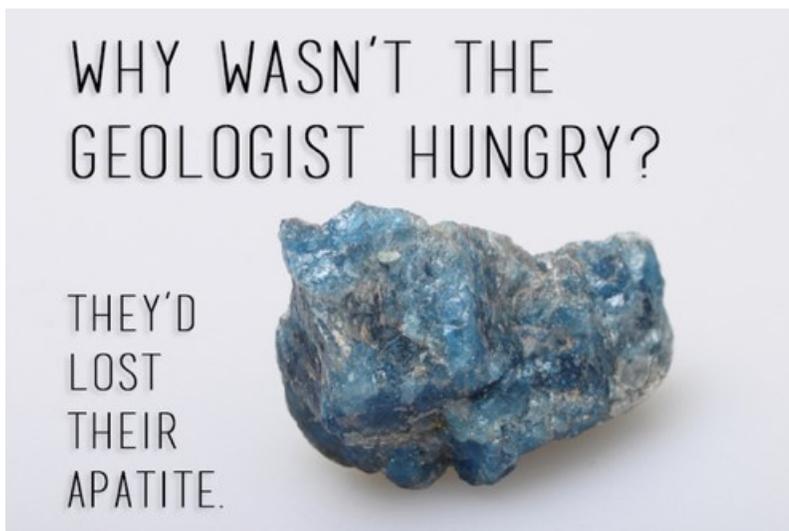
Paying membership dues is still being decided.

Dave Britten, Treasurer and Program Director, was recovering from surgery so instead of a program we had show and tell with specimens that were brought in. Thank you to Bruce, Wes, David, Peggy, Violet, Mary and Gayle for bringing in something to share.

The club shop is in the process of getting cleaned and ready for use. We will put out an announcement when it is open for members.

Gem of the month for May: Blue Stones-- Bring any blue stone in for show and tell.

Meeting Adjourned 11:00am



GEOLOGY TIP: THERE ARE SO MANY MICROPLATES AND AGES THAT NO ONE REMEMBERS THEM ALL, SO IN A PINCH YOU CAN BLUFF WITH DOG BREEDS.

## VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!



Meetings are on the FIRST Saturday of the month (except for Jan, July and Dec) at 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 \$15.00 per year for adults and \$7.50 for those under age 16
- Visit our website: [skagitrockandgem.com](http://skagitrockandgem.com)
- Email: [skagitrockandgem@gmail.com](mailto:skagitrockandgem@gmail.com)
- Mailing address: PO BOX 244 Mt. Vernon 98273

### 2022 Officers

President · Wes Frank 360-757-6276  
Vice President · Greg Hochmuht 360-223-5453  
Treasurer · David Britten 360-755-0741  
Secretary · Linda Keltz 360-424-6525  
Fed. Director · Virgil Keltz 360-424-6525  
Bulletin Editor · Debbie Frank 360-853-6883  
Past President · Eric Self 360-840-8342

### Committees

Annual Show Chair-Eric Self  
Facilities/Field Trips- Dave Britten  
Greeter-Linda Keltz  
Scholarship-Linda Keltz , Peggy Peterson  
Publicity-Frank Isca  
Stamps-Virgil Keltz  
Swap-Vandenburgs

### Membership Dues

We are not collecting dues right now. Everyone will still receive the newsletter as usual.

The club's year runs from September to August.

Payment can be sent to Dave Britten or

PO BOX 244 Mt. Vernon 98273

Dues are: \$15.00/ yr for adults \$7.50/yr age 16 and younger



Skagit Rock and Gem Club  
Debbie Frank, Editor  
20379 Aliston Ln.  
Burlington WA 98233

### Stamp Committee Update

Ed Anderson, a member of the Sweet Home Rock Club, and Aaron Currier, a member of the Willamette Agate & Mineral Society, are the new chairs of the Stamp Committee for NFMS. Both rockhounds are also philatelists (stamp collectors) and members of the Salem Stamp Society. Ed and Aaron will be collecting the stamps donated by members of the NFMS and preparing them to sell to raise money for the NFMS Scholarship Program. This is a change from the tradition of raising money to donate to cancer research. Although cancer research is an important endeavor and we continue to encourage such activities through your own efforts, it has been suggested to us by NFMS members to direct the funds to support the future of NFMS (junior members) and the study of the geologic sciences.



What we would like to see donated are US commemorative stamps (stamps depicting past events, places, people, animals, flowers, Christmas, rocks & minerals, etc.), any old (looking) stamps, and any collections (albums). If you have stamps on letters older than 1940, please leave them on the envelope and send the entire thing, especially if it was mailed overseas. We will gladly accept foreign stamps as well. You can save and send the entire envelope, again, if it's pre 1950. You can also save entire postcards with the postage on them (or not). If you tear or cut the stamp off the envelope, leave about a quarter inch around the stamp. Please don't cut the perforation. Please don't peel the stamp off the paper.

To donate stamps, you can bring them to a meeting or mail them directly to:

Aaron Currier  
Willamette Agate & Mineral Society  
2182 Broadway Ct. Salem OR 97304